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The Editors
THE 'ANTI-LEFT'

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Northern Ireland: A Protestant view

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A Catholic view

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By way of farewell

Thomas Powers

The trial of Vladimir Poresh

John Garvey

A different Orwell

Katharine Byrne

On humanness & honoring the dead

Jean Bethke Elshtain

Liberation theologians in dialogue

Peadar Kirby

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Correspondence

No more holocausts

Baltimore, Md.

To the Editors: Being a committed Jew, a member of a schule, and working in the ecumenical field, I followed your candid discussion of Kolbe [Feb. 11]. Whatever his faults, he died for someone else in a concentration camp. It is true that many Jews are bitter towards the Poles as they are bitter towards the world for betraying them. However, the Nazis murdered all the "non-peoples." Let us all unite and work towards a better world where there will not be any more holocausts.

MELVIN N. COHEN

General confusion

Dayton, Ohio

To the Editors: John W. Glaser's worry about our masculinized consciousness accepting without amusement or indignation the ironic construct "Mother General" is happily unfounded [January 28]. The word "general" in that phrase means simply "over all" or "common" as in the phrase general welfare. I think he weakens his case for the "feminization" of holy mother church in Epoch III by this misinterpretation of the word "general."

(BROTHER) DONALD FAHRIG, S.M.

Prejudicial images

Marshall, Minn.

To the Editors: Abigail McCarthy's column "An Ugly Resurgence" [Dec. 17] deplores what she perceives as the rise of anti-Semitism again. Given the evil that anti-Semitism has caused in this century it is perhaps wise to expose its venomous presence wherever it is detected. Yet the anxious and overheated tone of the piece distorts the history of anti-Semitism in America and undermines the legitimate plea for tolerance that she makes. Her overstatement retards any serious understanding of the problem and adds nothing to its solution. Anti-Semitism never came close to assuming the proportions in the United States that it had elsewhere and it is not likely that it ever will. John Higham who has written extensively on the history of anti-Semitism in the U.S. noted the "relative mildness" of American anti-Semitism and the "vast difference of intensity" in regard to it "between America and some European countries" despite common rhythms of the bigotry. He writes:

> Here it is sufficient to say that the Jews met neither as much hostility nor as much tolerance as certain other minorities. Although rapid social development apparently exposed and sensitized many Jews to more social discrimination than other European groups felt, in other respects they fared somewhat better. They did not fall victim to as much violence as did the Italians, and there was no organized anti-Semitic movement comparable to the anti-Catholic American Protective Association.
>
> (J. Higham, *Send These to Me*, Atheneum, 1975, p. 127)

Most curious and unfortunate is her remark that "whole immigrant groups came to his country bearing with them the poison of the active and virulent form of anti-Semitism which flourished in their native countries." Even if one were to take her statement with its all-embracing and colorful adjectives as absolutely true, it is difficult to know what to make of it. She seems to know a hidden history. How did these groups and their prejudices affect anti-Semitism in America? Gentlemen's agreements on the assembly line? Restrictive Covenants in South Chicago? Pogroms in Pittsburgh? Perhaps she means that East European Catholic Ethnics are now among the leading supporters of the PLO, or the defacers of synagogues or recruits for the Klan or their influence has caused others to become these. As an historian who writes on the experience of these groups in America, I know of no evidence to support any such contentions. In the context of her article the implications of her remark are demagogic and unChristian.

If anything the prejudices and stereotypes born out of communal rivalry between Christians and Jews in Eastern Europe may have had a more adverse effect on the American view of the Christians than of the Jews. The greater social mobility of Jewish immigrants and their children and the prominent role they have assumed in arts and media have made possible the wider propagation of the old prejudicial images the Jewish community in Eastern Europe had of its Christian neighbors than vice versa.

THADDEUS C. RADZIALOWSKI
Professor—Dept. of History
Southwest State University

John Leary

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editors: On behalf of all of us at the Center, I want to express our deep appreciation for John Cort's fine article memorializing our beloved brother and colleague, John Leary [Dec. 17]. Though he never enjoyed the grace of knowing John personally, he succeeded in capturing much of his special qualities and some measure of the great sense of loss that is ours.

Your readers may be interested to know that the Center, through the generosity of several donors, is establishing the John Leary Memorial Funds, two restricted accounts — one, it is hoped, to provide emergency legal assistance to Catholic non-registrants and the other (in the words of the principal donor) to assure that the "special meaning" of John Leary's life shall not be lost. As he put it,

(Continued on page 159)

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SANE CENTER OR JUST ANTI-LEFT?

FOR A LONG TIME it was standard operating procedure among historians and cultural critics to see the Catholic church as the antithesis of modern flux, a fortified island of permanence in the sea of change. It is now the style to see just the opposite: the church swept away by a whirlwind of updating. Both views reflect reality—and exaggerate it. Thus the press portrays the bishops' pastoral letter on nuclear armaments as a radical departure from past teaching when in fact it is a document that largely synthesizes and applies traditional approaches to a new situation. Likewise, whenever the pope reasserts established moral doctrine on a topic like abortion, some observers seem wide-eyed with astonishment and wonder what obscure Eastern European idiosyncrasy could be at work, as though the norm for popes since Vatican II were to take one's ethics from the *New York Times*.

Change continues, both good and bad. So does resistance to change, both good and bad. The latest development is a spate of committees, centers, and publications presenting themselves as lay-initiated counters to the excesses of the clergy and hierarchy. The immediate stimulus for the formation of these groups is opposition, ranging from mild to fierce, to the bishops' pastoral letter; but at a deeper level the groups represent a more general desire to halt the increasing frequency with which Catholic social and political activists have been challenging existing American policies and attitudes, both in regard to the economic system and to foreign policy. Beyond the question of nuclear arms, the chief areas of contention are the degree of moral legitimacy to be granted the current form of American capitalism, the critical stance of U.S. bishops and many other Catholics toward Washington's policy in Central America, and the appropriate focus for the peace-and-justice activities of the church, both at the level of the U.S. Catholic Conference and the dioceses.

Differences of opinion on these matters — for example, the specificity and authority with which church leaders should speak out on public issues — have long existed, and will long continue to exist. Meantime, the new organizational effort presents some novelties and a general character that deserve comment. One finds among the sponsors of these organizations the same names, individuals associated with various conservative and neoconservative political institutions like the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Institute on Religion and Democracy. Although the direction of the new Catholic groups appears firmly in the hands of such conservatives, their boards usually list the names of several individuals with reputations as moderate liberals. Accordingly, the new groups insist on their broad representative character and prefer to describe themselves as "centrist." We represent neither the right nor the left, declared one of their publications recently: "We intend to occupy the sane center."

Left, right, and center are notoriously slippery (and potent) labels in political discourse. In connection with religion they can be even more confusing. But if one is

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to give those terms any rough validity at all, it can be seen that the new groups are flying under a false flag. Despite their sprinkling of liberal names to "balance" the conservative ones, these initiatives are not "centrist." What they are is "anti-left." So far, the thrust of their activities is consistently and almost entirely directed against what are conventionally considered "left" positions among religious activists. Centrists and moderate liberals are quite welcome insofar as they are criticizing positions further to the left; otherwise they appear to be window-dressing.

Consider the Institute on Religion and Democracy, not a specifically Catholic group although it has Catholics on its board and letterhead and has given a good bit of attention to Catholic issues. The IRD is a kind of prototype for these operations. Having announced itself as opposing the political misuse of religion across the political spectrum, it has in practice relentlessly scrutinized the mainline Protestant denominations for signs of left-wing deviationism while breathing scarcely a word about right-wing abuses of religion. It has honored the centrist Bishop Obando of Nicaragua, who is struggling against a left-wing government, but it has not indicated similar interest in the struggles of centrist bishops in Chile and the Philippines against right-wing governments. If the IRD wants to be an "anti-left" organization, that is its own business, but why not admit it?

Consider, too, the Catholic writer who claims his new publication represents the "sane center." If left, right, and center are tricky terms in political and religious debate, that is doubly true about psychological terms. Is the "sane center" to be contrasted with an "insane" left or right? Is the center automatically sane simply by virtue of being the center, or is there also a "neurotic center" and perhaps even a "psychotic center"? Exactly how sane this writer's particular center is, can be seen a few paragraphs later when he takes up the subject of war. War, he says, referring to Our Lady of Fatima, "is not the crime, it is the punishment." The threat of nuclear war is not due to "some bloodlust in the Pentagon," nor to the possibility that "the citizenry is inadequately aware of what bombs can do," nor even to "the global designs of the Soviet Union." So why are we in danger of nuclear annihilation? Because "public and private moral practices in the United States call out for divine punishment" — in particular, abortion.

Now we would not deny that there is some scriptural and theological warrant for talking about war as "punishment." But we would think that, when contemplating the possible deaths of hundreds of millions in a nuclear war as well as the possible consequences on a planetary scale, the "sane center" might proceed cautiously in describing this punishment as "divine." We, too, are appalled by this society's massive resort to abortion, but if one wants to posit nuclear war as a punishment for sin, it is easier to argue, as some pacifists do, that it will be punishment for the sin of deploying these devastating weapons in the first place. Indeed, some pacifists argue that the widespread accommodation to abortion has its roots in our earlier accommodation to nuclear weapons. That argument goes too far for us, but at least it has chronology on its side.

Writing in a totally different kind of journal — in a recent issue of *America* — James Finn mounted a case against unilateral nuclear disarmament and against the policy of no-first-use endorsed in the second draft of the bishops' pastoral. Finn urged that we "bring our full intellectual resources to bear" on the nuclear weapons issue and recommended that tradition of moral teaching in the church which he believes would actually provide practical guidance to those responsible for American security. Whatever one may think of Finn's conclusions, his argument was eminently reasonable, dare we even say "sane." But what does Mr. Finn think of the nuclear-war-as-divine-punishment-for-abortion approach that we previously described? Or, for that matter, what does he think of another article that appeared in the same "anti-left" publication and which attributes the post-Vatican II removal of bad religious art from churches to "the heresy of Modernism" enjoying "Satanic assistance"? We don't know. All we do know is that Mr. Finn and a few other liberals have lent their names (and intellectual reputations) to the Editorial Board of that publication. Such, evidently, is the allure of the new Catholic "anti-left."

LIBERATION VERBALITY

The allure of the "anti-left" can partially be explained by the report in this issue of the recent dialogue between first-world and third-world liberation theologians (see page 134). Peadar Kirby, the author of this report (which parallels other news stories about the conference), was on the scene; we weren't. We can only guess at some of the elements of a meeting like this that cannot easily be included in a brief report—the personal courage, the painful experiences, the deep commitments that many third-world theologians would be bringing to Geneva. Clearly, our correspondent was impressed. He has described the deliberations and conclusions sympathetically, and we've passed on that description to our readers. They can judge for themselves.

At the same time, we have to admit that this and other reports of the conference, at least as they stand in cold type, leave us a bit skeptical, to put it gently. At a moment when villagers are slaughtering each other in India, when atrocities against civilians in Zimbabwe seem to be repeating the pattern under the black socialist Mugabe that they took under the previous white regime, when Iran and Iraq continue their pointless battles, when the Soviet Union carries out its Mylais in Afghanistan, when Communist nations consistently demonstrate their incapacity to provide either economic well-being or political freedom (who, one wonders, are the liberation theologians from the Communist "second world"?), it strikes us as more than slightly simple-minded to declare that the root cause of world oppression is "capitalist imperialism." The insistence of the feminist theologians on the oppression of women, which certainly did not begin with capitalism, at least

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seems to have forced an opening to a more complex kind of social analysis. But it won't be much of an opening if one simply adds "patriarchy" to "capitalist imperialism" and then has two all-purpose villains instead of one.

Are we being too literal? Are there not many other ways of reading the Geneva conference's statement? That capitalist imperialism is *a* root cause of oppression? (What, exactly, is a *root* cause, and can there be more than one of them?) That whatever you call it, capitalist muscle is still exerted in many ways from the centers of Western power so as to retard and distort the striving for human dignity? That third-world theologians need to assert their independence and underline the urgency of their concerns and that if this requires hyperbole, so be it? No doubt there was much said at this conference that has escaped these few condensed formulas, and there was probably much meant that even these formulas scantily represent, and there was perhaps even some amount of the self-criticism that is largely lacking in these reports. But to the extent that these bald and sweeping declarations are to be taken at face value, well, it's hard not to think of something said—Thomas Powers, take note—by Samuel Johnson almost exactly two hundred years ago: "Clear your mind of cant."

Washington report

BEHIND THE BUDGET

A DEFICIT BY ANY OTHER NAME

SUPPOSE YOU are an adviser to a politician who made a 1980 campaign promise to balance the budget in fiscal 1983. By February 1981 he had extended the promise to fiscal 1984. Now he has to submit his fiscal 1984 budget with a projected deficit of over $200 billion. What do you advise him to do? Blame someone, blame anyone, or take the heat? Swallow hard, there is no easy answer for this one.

Everyone knows that deficits are made worse by recessions — a severe recession even more so. A poor economy produces lower tax receipts and increased outlays for programs sensitive to the unemployment rate (e.g., unemployment benefits, food stamps, etc.). These cyclical fluctuations in revenues and spending are that part of the deficit which is depicted as "cyclical"; that which is left over as a result of taxing and expenditure policies is the "structural" deficit. In other terms, the structural deficit is that which exists even if one were to assume full employment and high economic activity.

Washington is beginning to come to grips with this problem of the deficit. Politically, the first step in solving such a problem is to determine precisely where the problem is. However, it is no longer just an investigation into how much of the present deficit is cyclical — that is, due to the recession — and how much is structural. It is a question of how to handle a structural deficit which is self-sustaining and, if unstopped, forever burgeoning.

The *President's Budget for Fiscal Year 1984* declares that for 1983, "31 percent of the deficit is cyclical in that year, and 69 percent structural in nature." The *Economic Report of the President*, transmitted to the president at the same time, states that, "approximately one-half of the 1983 budget deficit is due to the depressed state of the economy." The Congressional Budget Office, established by Congress for relatively objective information in just such situations, points out that "roughly two-thirds of the 1983 deficit appears to be the result of economic slack." Or as one economist wryly observed, if one accepted the depiction of the deficit in the president's budget, one would conclude we have no recession.

But such a disparity of accounts between the *President's Budget* and his *Economic Report* pales in comparison to the difficulty in explaining the causes of the structural deficit. The Office of Management and Budget traces the development of the deficit back to 1963, citing the incremental expansion of the "social contract" (Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid). OMB then points to the growth of entitlement programs (e.g., Aid to Dependent Children, federal retirement and disability programs) during the seventies, as the foundation of the problem. Together, this "rapid growth" in non-defense spending — to about 10 percent of GNP — is seen by OMB to have been at the expense of defense, which has been reduced, lamentably, from 8.3 percent of GNP in 1970 to 5.5 percent in 1981. The president is thus able to explain his structural deficit as an "inherited" burden in light of an urgent need to increase defense spending.

Naturally the House Budget Committee has its own perspective. They contend that the causes of the structural deficit started in 1981, the year, coincidentally, Mr. Reagan took office. The committee acknowledges that real defense spending declined from 1970 to 1981, but notes the role of the Vietnam war at the start of the decade and observes that from 1972 to 1981, total defense spending remained level in real terms. Further, it emphasizes that between 1981 and 1984, defense spending increased from 5.4 percent of GNP to 6.7 percent, net interest payments to finance the deficits rose from 2.3 percent of GNP to 2.8 percent. During the same period, the revenues the government would have received had there been six percent unemployed (a calculated figure known as "standard employment" revenues) fell from 21.0 to 18.6 percent of GNP, and "standard employment" domestic spending fell from 14.2 to 13.5 percent of GNP. The Budget Committee concludes, "Clearly the structural changes in policy driving up the deficit between 1981 and 1984 are the administration's rapid defense build-up, massive tax cuts, and the interest payments needed to service the huge government debt issued to 'pay' for them."

The Congressional Budget Office, in perhaps the most politically neutral of all explanations, begins its assessment by tracing patterns of the deficits from 1947. CBO observes that federal spending as a proportion of GNP remains very high by

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historical standards — higher than in any postwar year before 1982 — "largely because of the build-up in defense spending, rising interest payments, and the growth of entitlement programs." Yet CBO focuses its concerns, as do the president and Congress, on the five-year projections of the deficit — where revenues show a relative decline from 20.9 percent of GNP in 1981 to 18.3 percent in 1988. CBO identifies the main cause of this declining ratio — the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, aptly named by the *Washington Post* the Great Potlatch of 1981.

Most economists agree that a continually rising deficit during an economic recovery could harm that recovery by drawing funds away from business investment to finance the large deficit. Moreover the projected deficits are seen to be a factor in the current high long-term interest rates and a stimulus which conflicts with an anti-inflationary monetary policy.

Budget problems, as in politics in general, afford numerous alternative solutions; however, economic feasibility does not translate into political feasibility. No one is disagreeing about what the options are, but they surely disagree over which ones to choose. The debate focuses on revenue increases versus revenue decreases, defense hikes versus defense cuts, entitlement maintenance versus entitlement revisions. The task of dealing with the structural deficit in our nation's budget, however it is understood or interpreted, will not disappear soon. The debate will be waged throughout the decade; but the all-important beginning of the struggle will take place this spring in the 98th Congress.

The enormity of the problem facing the president and the Congress is perhaps dramatized by the following: Close down the entire non-defense operations of the federal government — the National Park Service, the FBI, the FAA, even Congress. Have the federal government cease all payments to states and local governments, leaving the government only to pay for national defense, interest on the debt, and direct payments to individuals. Guess what — there would still be a deficit.

JEREMIAH BARUCH

(Jeremiah Baruch is the pseudonym of a Washington writer with a position in government.)

Report from Geneva

WORLDS IN DIALOGUE

THEOLOGY FOR THE OPPRESSED

"WE ARE HERE to begin a new era in theological reflection and action," said Bishop Emilio de Carvalho of Angola. "The signs of the times are calling for a theology from the oppressed, not removed from the people's struggles. It is this irruption of the oppressed and of the poor that constitutes an exciting challenge to committed Christians, to theology."

The bishop's words were far from rhetorical. For he was opening the first dialogue between theologians from the first world and third world, bringing together leading Catholic and Protestant liberation theologians from Latin America, Africa, and Asia with their counterparts in Western Europe and North America. For a week in early January on the outskirts of Geneva they shared their different perceptions of oppression and its causes, shared their theological methods arising from their attempts to understand the biblical message from the standpoint of the oppressed, and sought a closer coordination of their efforts to fashion a church more at the service of liberation.

Organized by EATWOT, the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, the dialogue marked a new stage in consolidating the growing impact of liberation theology not only throughout the third world but in sectors of the first world also. While many of the North American and Latin American theologians present had met each other at the Theology in the Americas dialogues and while EATWOT itself has hosted five different exchanges between third-world theologians since it was founded in 1976, the Geneva dialogue was the most comprehensive meeting yet organized.

In choosing to invite first-world theologians who seek to relate their theology to the struggles of the oppressed in their countries, the EATWOT organizers by-passed most of the major academic theologians from Western Europe and North America. Therefore, even though almost every Western European country had two representatives present, most of them were working at grass-roots level and were not major names in academic theology. From North America came James Cone, the leading black theologian, and such well-known feminist theologians as Rosemary Radford Ruether, Letty Russell, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and Sheila Collins. Also Jim Wallis of the Sojourners community in Washington D.C. and Don Prange, a Lutheran pastor working in the Appalachian mountains, represented the more grass-roots elements in the U.S.

Some third-world theologians were said to have been disappointed that the dialogue did not provide them with the opportunity to challenge directly leading European and North American theologians whom they feel have never accepted liberation theology as fully valid theology. But if such a challenge must await another dialogue, the Geneva meeting did pose many other equally significant challenges.

Neither did these all originate from the third-world theologians, many of whom were forced to acknowledge the existence of very sizable pockets of oppression within first-world countries. This was most notably true on the feminist issue. In her address to the dialogue, Rosemary Radford Ruether had appealed that it not be treated as a trivial issue. "It is not just the issue of middle-class and first-world women though it may have been dealt with up to now by these women," she said. "The issue will automatically not be taken care of by the nationalist or socialist movements until they address it specifically." The acceptance of Dr. Radford Ruether's appeal by the dialogue was reflected in the treatment of sexism in the final message issued at the close. This is a simply written letter

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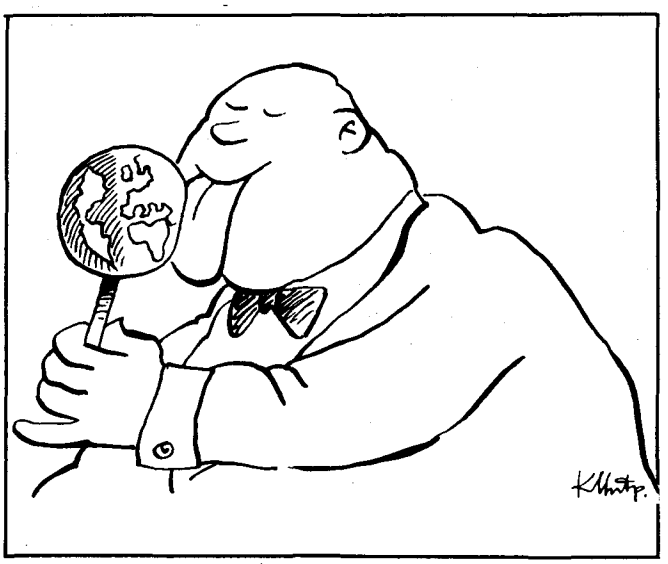
addressed to "our sisters and brothers living their faith in Christian communities," and it calls sexism, which heads its section on different forms of oppression, "a sign of death for half of humanity."

This acknowledgment, coupled with the decision to hold a separate dialogue between first- and third-world women at some future date, did not eradicate all the tensions on the issue however. Some third-world women resented remarks made by delegates who said that they sensed a divided loyalty among these women, divided between their commitment to the liberation struggles in their own countries and to the struggle for women's rights throughout the world. Dr. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza of the theology department of the University of Notre Dame was the only participant to disagree publicly with the general question posed to all as to whether there was a consensus that the root cause of oppression lay in a world system which could be called "capitalist imperialism that is inherently sexist and racist and that is extending its dominating power throughout the world." For Dr. Schüssler Fiorenza the root cause was patriarchy of which capitalism was a qualifier, she said.

WHILE SEXISM was the main challenge posed by the first-world group, the theologians from Africa and Asia had their own challenges to offer to what is still the dominant group within EATWOT, the Latin Americans. Acknowledging readily that Asian theology had learnt a lot from the liberative force of the class analysis which underlies Latin American theology, some of the Asians present cautioned the Latin Americans not to allow issues of race and culture to become subsidiary to those of class. As Bishop Lakshman Wickremesinghe of Kurunagala in Sri Lanka described the attempts being made in his diocese not just to adapt Christianity to a situation of rich and highly developed non-Christian faiths but to re-interpret the whole Christian message from the standpoint of local thought-patterns and symbol systems, it emerged that he was speaking of a far more profound challenge to Christianity than anything posed by the Latin Americans. "This has led to a radical questioning of the whole hellenized tradition," he said, adding that for some it even called into question the very centrality of Christ and normativeness of the Bible.



From Africa the challenge was equally radical. Many of the African delegates referred to what they called "anthropological poverty," the defining legacy that European colonialism had left their continent, races, and cultures. This they defined as not just a material poverty but "one which reaches people at the heart of their being: without culture or religion, without fundamental rights or the institutions and civilizations that belong to them. A poverty which denies their right to exist, to love, to experience." That such a radical impoverishment had been brought about very often with the active help of Christian churches made the very doing of theology at all very problematical in the African situation. As one theologian said of apartheid in South Africa: "It is a theological ideology which in a sense was born in the church so that theology itself in the apartheid situation has become problematic."

This rich interchange of the experiences of different continents, which is the primary context for the doing of theology today, complemented and enriched but also challenged the participants. As Father Sergio Torres, the Chilean executive secretary of EATWOT, commented, it showed the need for a more comprehensive social analysis which could incorporate all of these different experiences and relate them one to the other.

BUT IF THE GENEVA meeting already began to forge some of this more comprehensive social analysis, it was also very valuable for allowing participants to share their different experiences of doing theology among the oppressed. Whether it was working with basic Christian communities among the strong and militant workers' movement in Italy, helping inner-city people in London to uncover and express their religious experience, working for women's rights in the Dutch Catholic church, or relating to the peace movement in West Germany, what the Geneva dialogue uncovered was the existence of a grass-roots church in Western Europe and North America using similar methods and approaches to those being used in the third world.

The existence of such a church confirmed in practice what the one leading academic Western European theologian present, Johann Baptist Metz of West Germany, said in his addresss. Speaking on "The End of the Eurocentric Era of Christianity," he asked: "Could there perhaps now be something like a new Reformation-situation in which Catholicism learns to invoke grace as liberation and thus learns to live?" This second Reformation, he went on, is coming "not from Wittenburg or Geneva, nor from Rome, but from the poor churches." This development, he said, will "interrupt the development of Christianity as a bourgeois religion."

The spirituality which underlies this growth of a new form of church was also emphasized at many points during the dialogue. Pablo Richard of Costa Rica spoke of the basic division at the heart of spirituality today which, he said, is not

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that of body and soul as formerly but is the division between the God of life and the idols of death. It was Hugo Assmann of Brazil who applied this in a particularly striking way to our situation when he said: "Idolatry is always related to oppression and mechanisms of domination . . . but behind all these there is the spirit of the system. If you touch that you are touching the idols. The spirituality of capitalism is idolatry. What we in the anti-capitalist struggle need is a profound spirituality to counteract this."

For so many Christians in the first world whose faith has been profoundly touched by this "spirituality of capitalism" such a remark is a sobering reminder of the rich new insights offered to us by the third world. In organizing the Geneva dialogue EATWOT sought to bring their particular theological method and commitment to bear more coherently on Western European and North American theology. It may in time be seen to mark the point when the third-world theologians found not just listeners among first-world theologians but active partners in the struggle to fashion a new church at the service of a new world.

PEADAR KIRBY

(Peadar Kirby, a previous contributor, is an Irish journalist living in Dublin.)

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

THE TRIAL OF V. PORESH

AN ACCOUNT OF THE CHRISTIAN SEMINAR

THREE YEARS AGO Vladimir Poresh was sentenced by a Soviet court to five years in a labor camp, followed by three years of internal exile. His official crime was "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." His actual offense was his membership in a remarkable group, the Christian Seminar.

The information we have about the Christian Seminar is based almost entirely on *samizdat* documents which have made their way West. What we know of the Christian Seminar and the fate of some of its members tells us a lot about the state of religion in the Soviet Union. It calls our own approach to Christianity into question as well.

The Christian Seminar is a group of young men and women, most of them converts to Christianity. The story of the group's founder, Alexander Ogorodnikov, is in many ways typical. Ogorodnikov was a cinematography student who grew disillusioned with Marxism and explored various forms of nihilism and the life of the hip subculture before Pasolini's film *The Gospel According to Matthew* led him to study Christianity. He joined the Orthodox church, lost his scholarship as a result of his conversion, and was given a job as a maintenance man at a tuberculosis clinic in Moscow and a shed — formerly a carpenter's workshop — to live in. It was there, in 1974, that the first meetings of the Christian Seminar took place.

Ogorodnikov gave the reasons for the Seminar's formation in a letter to Philip Potter, Secretary-General of the World Council of Churches: "We were convinced that our problems were being raised neither in church sermons, which are the only means for the religious education of believers, nor in the pages of the church journal, the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, which, moreover, is inaccessible to the ordinary Christian. Most important of all, in the Russian church the parish is not like a brotherly community where Christian love of one's neighbor becomes a reality. The State persecutes every manifestation of church life, except for the performance of a 'religious cult.' Our thirst for spiritual communion, religious education and missionary service runs up against all the might of the State's repressive machinery."

The Christian Seminar was an obvious outgrowth of the insight of the young Christians who gathered to form it: they knew that Christianity has a social resonance. They gathered in Ogorodnikov's shed to discuss the Bible and the Fathers of the Church, as well as the thought of Solovyov, Berdyayev, Bulgakov, Lossky, and other modern Orthodox thinkers. Members of the Seminar saw their work as threefold: they wanted to become theologically and philosophically grounded in a way which was closed to them under the officially tolerated church channels; they wanted to defend the rights of all believers to practice their religion; and they wanted to communicate with people of different faiths in and outside of the Soviet Union. So they met for discussion and mutual support, produced two issues of a *samizdat* journal, *Obshchina* (Community), and wrote letters to fellow Christians in the USSR and abroad.

One Protestant member of the Seminar noted the willingness of the largely Orthodox group to learn from the Protestant experience, and the Seminar has made an effort to keep in touch with Christians in other countries, particularly with the Italian Catholic youth organization "Communione e Liberazione." There is a strong ecumenical direction among members of the Seminar. They believe, for example, that the interaction of Russian Orthodoxy with Roman Catholicism will enable both churches to fulfill their vocations. (In this they have been influenced by Vladimir Solovyov, who believed that the Christian church must be at once Catholic in its pursuit of unity, Orthodox in its cultivation of the interior life and radical humility, and Protestant in its commitment to Biblical fidelity. Solovyov has been called a "Russian Newman" because he took communion in Catholic churches; but he felt that he had never left Orthodoxy, and the Orthodox claim him as their own. It may be that he was simply ahead of his time, and of our churches.)

The present condition of the Christian

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Seminar is difficult to know. Its founder, Alexander Ogorodnikov, is in prison; his sentence totals eleven years. At least eleven members have been arrested at various times. Only the second issue of *Obshchina* has reached the West. The first was confiscated by the KGB, and there may be no existing copies. The Seminar's meeting places have been raided, members have been beaten, and some of them, detained for "psychological disorders," have been forced to undergo damaging drug treatments. One member, Tatyana Shchipkova, was hounded out of a teaching job and in January of 1980 was sentenced to three years in a labor camp. The number of Seminar members now in prison is uncertain, but one of the cases about which we have some details is that of Vladimir Poresh.

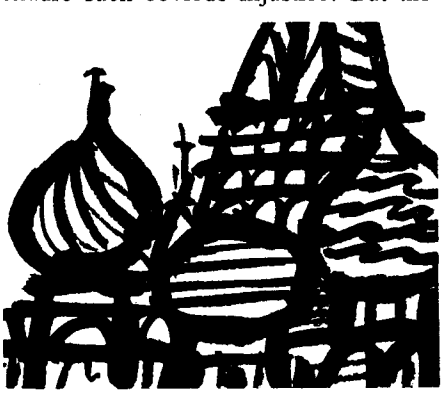
Poresh, now 34, was baptized in 1974. He contributed to *Obshchina* and was harassed and followed for a while. On August 1, 1979, Poresh was arrested and charged with anti-Soviet activities. Poresh conducted his own defense at the trial, which took place in Leningrad from April 23 to April 25, 1980.

"The indictment says I wanted to influence people," Poresh told the court. "Naturally I did: anyone who writes wants to influence and convince people. I have a negative attitude towards Soviet power but I have never called for struggle against it: fighting, struggling, poisoning the wells — nothing like that. My letter to A.I. Solzhenitsyn which features in this trial shows my conviction that the best way of struggling against Soviet power is not to struggle against it at all . . . I am talking primarily about spiritual action, about creating a new reality. So let me say once again that the aim of our journal, and my own personal aim, was the Christianization of the world, the liberation of people from social pressures: this is confirmed in my letter to Italian and French friends. At the preliminary inquiry I said that I had had meetings with two Italian girls, Agnesa and Graziella, from the Catholic youth organization 'Communione e Liberazione.' The program of this Catholic organization has been brought up at this trial. In it, translating from the Italian, one can read the following: 'We must struggle against social pressure and towards spiritual freedom.' If I had called for the restoration of capitalism (as has been stated here), then what would the Italians have to free themselves from, since they have freedom and democracy? Why in capitalist Italy do they have to struggle against society? The point is that we have one common goal: struggling against the social sinfulness of the world. We are calling for liberation from sin, from sinful life in society . . . I consider that our task is to create a Christian community transcending national boundaries, and a new Christian worldview."

In his final statement to the court, Poresh said, "The Procurator asked for a short sentence for me. I would have asked for a longer one, but I know that this would be too great an honor for me. There are people who have done much more for the church than I have.

"You have seen the witnesses. They are all my friends, believers and unbelievers. I saw joy on their faces: it was a joy to them to see me and a joy to me to see them. This hall was filled with a constant sense of joy in spite of the fact that I am in custody. Many of them helped me even though they did not completely share my convictions. This is a new religious community . . . This new spiritual reality, this communal Christian view of the world, is being created everywhere, even here in the courtroom, and here I see the goal and meaning of this trial."

One understandable reaction to the story of the Christian Seminar is to feel some relief that few of us have suffered for our beliefs as Poresh and his companions have suffered, and we feel compassion for those who have been forced to endure such obvious injustice. But the more one reads of the struggles of those who suffer for their belief, the more another dimension of their belief, and ours, becomes apparent.



Most of us have never been forced to become aware of the cost of belief, or what it truly demands of us. They have been; and their words and witness have an intensity and hope which make most of what passes for Christianity in the West look pale and shallowly rooted. In a recent issue of *Sojourners* a visitor to Russia described a conversation with one Russian Christian, who said that he felt sorry for American Christians, because the materialism and ease of our society could so easily blind us to the demands of true Christianity. It is clear from the experience and testimony of those involved in the Christian Seminar that they understand something about Christianity which we would do well to learn: Christianity is not a seasoning with which we may choose to season our primarily secular experience. If it is real, it means thorough transformation.

Apart from telling something about these brave men and women this column has a twofold purpose. One is to acquaint *Commonweal* readers with the work of Keston College, a research center in England which publishes the excellent *Religion in Communist Lands*. All of the material quoted in this column appeared in several issues of that journal, which is objective, carefully researched, and indispensable for anyone who wants to learn about the condition of believers in Communist countries. The patrons of Keston College include leaders of the Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish communities of Great Britain, and articles in *Religion in Communist Lands* have dealt not only with Christianity and Judaism but also with the plight of Buddhist and Islamic believers. Keston College's address,for those who want to know more about its work, is Heathfield Road, Keston, Kent BR2 6BA, England.

The people who founded Keston College have also formed an organization to correspond with and aid Christian prisoners and their families. Aid to Russian Christians has an American branch. It is the Society of St. Stephen, R.R. #2, Box

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51, Athens, Illinois 62613. The society needs money, and contributions are appreciated. But what it needs even more are individuals and groups willing to sponsor particular prisoners and their families. Since the cost of sending a package full of needed materials to the Soviet Union can be prohibitive, it makes sense for church groups, prayer groups, or other communities of Christians to do collectively what it might be difficult for someone to do individually. Write to the Society of St. Stephen for more information. The need is clear enough: there are nearly four hundred known Christian prisoners in the USSR, and their families share their fate. The wife of Father Gleb Yakunin, for example, is ill, unable to work, and depends upon the generosity of others to support her children.

The message which these Russian Christians bring to the West is revolutionary in the New Testament sense of the word. Toward the end of the transcript of Vladimir Poresh's trial, there is an interesting exchange.

"*Poresh:* Essentially I have been sentenced for my worldview. If our State is totalitarian, I am in fact breaking the law by having my own worldview, which I have never concealed and which I have talked about honestly and openly. I simply don't understand how I could have kept out of prison. What I did is a natural consequence of my convictions. According to the laws of our country I should have sat quietly, in silence; but it is not enough for a Christian to perform rituals: We can't stop there, we need the whole world.

"*Judge:* But you yourself stress that you were not persecuted for religious convictions. You were given the opportunity of being baptized and of baptizing your children. Even when you were in prison before the trial you had the opportunity to make your confession.

"*Poresh:* Yes, I had good relations at work, and even the Party organizer treated me properly and kindly. In prison they gave me a prayer book and a Bible. I am grateful for that. But this is not enough. We need the whole world.

"*Judge:* What? What do you need?

"*Poresh:* The whole world."

JOHN GARVEY

Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

BY WAY OF FAREWELL

AFTER EIGHT YEARS, THE TIME HAS COME

I OFTEN WONDER, not idly, who reads *Commonweal*? Some magazines spend a fortune finding out. The answer is generally someone in middle age, with a spouse and 1.8 children and maybe $12,000 a year in discretionary income. But of course it's not discretionary income I wonder about. What interests me is the reader's emotional temper and capacity to respond. We might call it discretionary feeling — what the reader has left over when he or she has met the demands of daily life. Raising a family, holding a job, and doing one's bit locally all take a lot out of you. If you stint yourself, or grow weary or crabbed, the effect is soon apparent. Doubtless this keeps us sensitive and alert. But the world has its claims too, even — perhaps especially — when it's hard to see what we can do about it. Readership surveys never include an estimate of our discretionary feeling, but it's there, something the reader *has*, along with his four-year-old car, his term life insurance, his burden of consumer debt, and his 1.6 television sets.

In the years since 1975, when I began writing this column — then thinly disguised as comment on the press — a picture of the *Commonweal* reader has slowly emerged in my mind. It is far from having a scientific basis. Occasionally I get a letter, maybe seven or eight a year. The writers fall into no obvious pattern. They are fiercely particular. They don't have children in fractions. A surprising number simply can't understand why I persist in thinking that Lee Harvey Oswald shot John F. Kennedy. One hoped I would send him a postcard before moving to New Zealand. Another felt I had been unfair to Napoleon. But all of my correspondents have had one thing, at least, in common: they were prompted to write by something which had nothing — in the usual narrow sense of the phrase — to do with them.

Another important series of clues have come from chance encounters. Someone at a party, or on a plane, or waiting in a line for the ski lift, will confess to a subscription to *Commonweal*. When this happens I grow intensely interested, and commence a whirlwind interrogation, not from idle curiosity but because writing is a lot like conversation. The flavor goes out of it as soon as you begin to suspect you're talking to a wall, or to yourself. The writer *needs* the reader. From odds and ends, then — offhand remarks, kind words, protests, and innocent questions — I have gradually pieced together a kind of composite portrait of the *Commonweal* reader. It is quite detailed. He — or she: the breakdown seems to follow nature — has been around awhile, used to smoke (or plans to quit), likes Graham Greene's spy stories better than his serious novels, reads (or at least buys) a couple of difficult books a year, votes in local elections, grows uneasy from prolonged gazing at the sea, and, with very few exceptions, fails to grasp the charm of Samuel Johnson.

I find this puzzling. Johnson was a man of extraordinary breadth of human feeling. He had an acute sense of what mattered in life. The problem may be Johnson's frequent brutality in conversation, or his infamous political convictions, which held no brief for the idea that men might elevate or ameliorate their condition through collective public action. I concede his position goes against the grain, but would argue it doesn't much matter. Since he had opinions on everything he had opinions on politics. His sense of completeness seemed to require it. But it was people he cared about. Chewing over the morning's newspaper bored him. It is diffidence in company which limits the conversation of so many people to *things* — the issues of the day — as if they could think of nothing to say of themselves. This topical harping ex-

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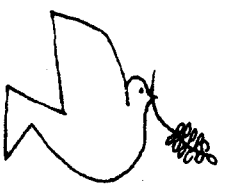
cited Johnson's impatience. With his friend Hester Thrale he once burst out, "Alas, alas, how this unmeaning stuff spoils all my comfort in my friends' conversation. Will the people never have done with it; and shall I never hear again a sentence without the *French* in it? Here is no invasion coming, and you *know* there is none. . . . *Oh, pray*, let us hear no more of it!" I myself harp on topics with the worst of them, but deep down I'm with Johnson. I wish the talk of *things* could be pushed away forever, and we might safely stick to art, literature, philosophy, and the characters of our friends.

But the world won't release us for long; it tugs us back. This is what *Commonweal* readers have in common — an uneasy sense of public failure. Something has gone seriously wrong. In spite of our genius and our blessings we are failing in what we make of the world. I find it hard to pin down this troubled feeling precisely. It has no single focus. The problem isn't war, poverty, injustice, or callous disregard of the redwoods and the blue whales, but what these and other ills suggest about the way we are conducting ourselves.

Think of the subjects which appear in *Commonweal* week after week, so many of them captured in the names of places — Belfast, El Salvador, Afghanistan, Poland, South Africa, Cambodia. From time to time names are dropped, or added. We don't see Bangladesh, Biafra, or Watts any more. Vietnam has almost disappeared. Lebanon has recently joined the list. These names all suggest ghastly breakdowns of fellow feeling. Each one is highly particular. None of them is fun to read about. It is impossible not to wonder what they have to do with us. With the exception of Lebanon, I myself have never been to any of these places. I don't know anyone who lives there. I have only the sketchiest sense of their history. For the most part I have few ideas how they might solve their problems, and in any event no one's asking. Even when it seems possible their troubles might spill over onto us, there's little I can do about it. Nothing in fact. Sometimes I even forget to vote. So why do the readers of *Commonweal* dutifully renew their subscriptions to this biweekly gathering of thoughtful comment so heavily weighted toward human misery, failure, hardheartedness, and gloom? The magazine offers no systematic program for the solution of these problems. Indeed, its approach reminds me of a doctor's remark that, faced with certain cancers, he could find nothing to do but treat the symptoms. I can only conclude these readers have got discretionary feeling to spare.

THE TIME has come for me to quit writing this column. The fact is I have forgotten how to go about it right. A couple of years ago I began to look into the problems posed by nuclear weapons. What I have learned is easily outlined. It has two parts. The first concerns the weapons themselves. They have always been destructive on a scale hard to imagine, or even to memorize. Who can grasp the idea of a thousand tons of TNT? When I was a kid a firecracker once went off in my hand. It hurt like the devil. The tips of my fingers were blackened. The flash, the bang, and the pain all came from a gram or two of black powder. I have been leery of fireworks ever since. A thousand tons of the stuff is simply beyond imagining. The same is of course true for 100,000 tons, or a million tons, or the *ten billion* tons which the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment once estimated would be detonated during a major nuclear war. And even then the world's arsenals would not be exhausted.

But it is not just the destrucive capacity of nuclear weapons which poses a problem. It is their numbers, their versatility, and their accuracy. In the late 1930s Einstein, himself, once suggested that a nuclear weapon would be so big it would have to be delivered by ship. When Oppenheimer saw some early plans for a thermonuclear weapon, he scornfully asked how they planned to get it to the target — by oxcart? But there is no limit to human genius. First we figured out how to make the bomb, and then we figured out how to make it small. I once stood next to a re-entry vehicle for a Minuteman missile, a sleek grey cone about waist high. Its destructive power is equivalent to 350,000 tons of TNT. The latest version of the Minuteman carries three re-entry vehicles of this sort. The MX, if it is ever built, will be able to carry twelve. Some Russian missiles are big enough to carry forty. For reasons which seemed like a good idea at the time, the United States and the Soviet Union have built many thousands of such warheads, and the planes and missiles to deliver them. The reasons are apparently still compelling, although not to me, because the two sides are now planning to build thousands more. That is the first part of the problem.



The second part of the problem is the belief of the people in charge of these two great arsenals that we not only can, but must, live with them from now on. They are not planning to negotiate them away. They are not even dreaming of negotiating them away. They feel *safe* with them. I am giving it to you straight. I have tried to think of ways we might get out of this awful jam and I haven't come up with one which even qualifies as farfetched. Of course I am in favor of arms control, etc., etc., but am not much encouraged its time has come. The problem we have created for ourselves is so deeply rooted, and so complacently accepted within the institutions running the show, that I sometimes find myself wondering if God really does intervene in history. If so, now's his chance.

I have walked around this problem many times in columns over the last two years, but the time has come to quit. A column ought to have a bit of range, whereas I have fallen into a rut. It's a very interesting rut, but a rut all the same. Ruts are good for books, not for columns. My chief regret is my failure to bring the reader around on the subject of Samuel Johnson. I wish there were time for one more go at it. If we were all more like Johnson, the combat would take place only in drawing rooms. I should like to live in such a world.

THOMAS POWERS

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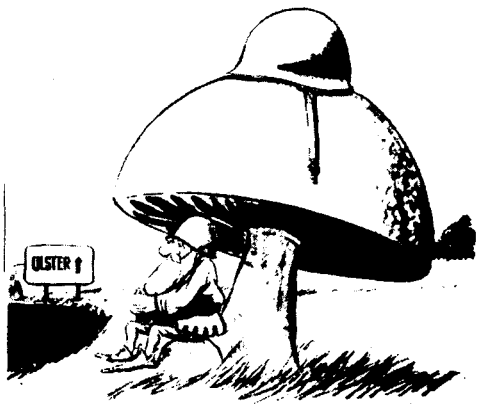
THE ISSUE IS NATIONALISM, NOT DISCRIMINATION



A Protestant view of Northern Ireland

Over the last three years, Commonweal *has published half a dozen articles analyzing various aspects of the conflict in Northern Ireland and the efforts to resolve it. Last year we were visited by the Reverend Robert Cobain, Information Officer of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Reverend Cobain promised to send us an analysis of the situation "from a Protestant point of view." His article follows.*

THE EDITORS

ROBERT COBAIN

WHAT IS the conflict in Northern Ireland about? It is not, at least as this Presbyterian sees it, a "war of religion." Catholic and Protestant identification is very important, but the basic dispute is political, one of rival nationalisms. The quarrel springs from the reality of the divided communities in Northern Ireland.

The majority of the people in Northern Ireland, mostly members of various Protestant churches, with a Scotch-Irish or Anglo-Irish tradition, see their national life and loyalties in terms of union with the "mainland" of Great Britain. They are opposed to a "United Ireland" which they believe would sever them from their cultural and historical roots. They do not, however, see themselves as Scots or English men or women, any more than a Texan must be Yankee to be an American.

The minority in Northern Ireland, mostly members of the Roman Catholic church, cherish their Irish tradition and think more in terms of a closer union with the Irish Republic. It's rather similar to Mexican-Americans looking to Mexico. They are opposed to Britain and the "statehood" of Northern Ireland.

With the minority questioning the legitimacy of an independent Northern state, the majority naturally questioned the loyalty of the minority to that state. These suspicions have been barriers to any progress along the road to political partnership or powersharing between majority and minority.

REVEREND ROBERT COBAIN *is the Information Officer for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and editor of the* Presbyterian Herald, *the official magazine of the Presbyterian Church.*

There is, however, another interpretation of the conflict in Northern Ireland. It focuses on recent, concrete grievances rather than deep historical divisions. It does not present itself as an alternative that necessarily excludes the view I have just described; it simply tends to overshadow it.

Most journalists, academics, and commissions of inquiry have put forward the theory that the reason for the violence from the Roman Catholic community in the period 1968 to 1971 and for the rise of the Provisional I.R.A. was the systematic discrimination practiced against Catholics by Protestants. Roman Catholics and their advocates have time and time again claimed that the franchise vote was unfair; that there was gerrymandering in local councils; that the allocation of houses and jobs by local councils was weighted against the Roman Catholic community; that discrimination was practiced by private firms; and that a lack of investment led to higher rates of unemployment in Roman Catholic areas.

Protestants like myself are willing to grant a measure of truth to these claims, but we do not believe that a close examination of the facts shows that discrimination is really the key which explains Northern Ireland's travail. I would argue, instead, that the Roman Catholic support for the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association and the violence associated with its campaign showed a more traditional nationalist flavor than is generally admitted.

Protestants did on occasion discriminate against Roman Catholics — as did Roman Catholics against Protestants. Mrs. Bernadette McAliskey (formerly Bernadette Devlin) said in *Price of My Soul* that discrimination "is only less serious on the Catholic side because there are fewer Catholic bosses and fewer local authorities in a position to practice discrimination." While discrimination should not be tolerated whenever and wherever it can be corrected, it is also a fact of life — and hardly in Northern Ireland alone! If major conclusions are going to be based on charges of discrimination, then we are obliged to look carefully at the degree of discrimination, and how and why it was exercised, and by whom.

It is unfortunately true that Unionism was sectarian in making no real attempt to recruit Roman Catholics as members of

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the party and as candidates for election. Mr. Robert McCartney, Q.C., a new name in the Unionist ranks, has expressed his desire to reform the Unionist party to make it more attractive to Roman Catholics. But with active and passive resistance, and opposition to the Unionist government by the majority of Roman Catholics who refused for so long to be a true opposition in a political sense, the Protestants became engrained with a will to make the system of government work despite Roman Catholic non-participation in any real sense.

Most writers said the local government franchise giving extra votes to businessmen was grossly biased against Roman Catholics. When you look at the facts you find that just over 1 percent of the local government electorate were affected by the business electorate. Those who paid local taxes had the right to vote; those who were disenfranchised were lodgers, servants, and others of voting age living at home and not paying local taxes. I. Bridge and C. O'Leary, in their study *Belfast: Approach to Crisis, A Study of Belfast Politics 1613-1970,* showed that 28 percent of adult Roman Catholics and 18.5 percent of Protestants were unable to vote in local elections. On 1961 figures that meant that 75,865 Roman Catholics and 109,407 Protestants were disenfranchised in Belfast.

The manipulation of ward boundaries coupled with franchise restrictions led, it is said, to Roman Catholics being denied control of local areas in which they held a majority. The All Party Anti-Partition Conference, based in the Irish Republic, published a pamphlet *One Vote Equals Two* in which it said, "Only a carefully organized plan could provide this uniformity of discrimination" in almost every local government area in the Six Counties.

Statistics just prior to 1967 do not support this picture of discrimination. Stabane had a proportion of nationalist councilors virtually identical with the proportion of Roman Catholics. In Downpatrick, where only 68 percent of the adult population was Roman Catholic, Catholics were 91.7 percent of the councilors. Furthermore to describe towns like Dungannon and Enniskillen as gerrymandered when controlled by the majority population of the town is a mischievious misuse of the term. It also needs to be noted and underlined that both Ballycastle and Limavady had Protestant majorities yet were governed by nationalist councils. This is certainly not evidence for a "carefully organized plan" to prevent Roman Catholic control as alleged by the All Party Anti-Partition Conference.

THE CONTROL of local authorities was important in Northern Ireland before the reform of local government took place because the councils allocated housing and jobs. It is part of conventional lore that Protestant councils discriminated against Roman Catholics in these areas too.

The "spoils" system operated in Northern Ireland just as in the U.S., Great Britain, and in fact the world over. Protestant councils no doubt did discriminate against Roman Catholics; but equally it has to be said that Roman Catholic councils also discriminated against Protestants. D.P. Barritt and C.F. Carter in *The Northern Ireland Problem: A Study in Group Relations* (pp. 67, 97-99), show that in Newry, "out of 765 council houses, 743 were occupied by Catholics and 22 by Protestants" while no Protestants at all were employed by the local council. A province-wide survey shows also that where Roman Catholics were in control of councils there was a greater bias in the treatment of Protestants, e.g., 20.4 percent of Protestants lived in council houses and had 3.7 percent working for the council while 40.6 percent of Roman Catholics lived in council houses and had 5.3 percent working for the council.

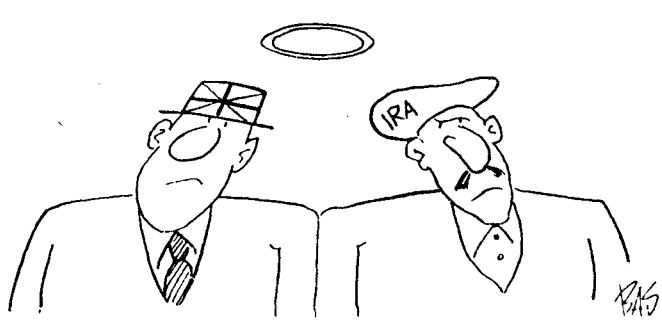
The 1971 census figures show that Roman Catholic households in Northern Ireland, in proportion to their number, were occupying a share of public authority housing units which was over 25 percent bigger than the proportionate share occupied by their Protestant neighbors. Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland had a four times greater chance of obtaining a subsidized public authority home than was available to their co-religionists in the Irish Republic.

Employment is another area where discrimination against Roman Catholics has been alleged.

There is little doubt that Roman Catholics, like Presbyterians in the past, suffer in that they have a weaker economic base to start with than is the case in the Protestant community as a whole. The emphasis is therefore on personal attainment. Lacking capital or land, Catholics have drifted towards the teaching profession, the legal profession, the theater, and so on. There is a significant upward mobility taking place among the Roman Catholic community, especially since the 1944 Education Act opened new possibilities for the less privileged.

Discrimination against Roman Catholics by some Protestant firms did take place, but Barritt and Carter show that employment policies of non-Roman Catholic firms were variable and many employed Roman Catholics. You get a distorted picture of Northern Ireland society if you focus solely on the tendency of Protestant employers to hire Protestant workers. It is natural, in view of social and residential segregation and communal solidarity, that where possible Roman Catholics patronize Roman Catholic stores, Roman Catholic professionals, and Roman Catholic businesses. Protestants are inclined to do the same.

The 1971 census figures showed that it had apparently been one-twelfth harder for a Roman Catholic to be employed than for a Protestant. The reason for this difference is the higher Roman Catholic birth rate. A higher birth rate means more young people in the work force. Throughout all Western



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countries, the burden of unemployment is at least twice as heavy among young workers, and this affects the Roman Catholic communities' employment prospects in Northern Ireland. P.A. Compton, a lecturer in geography at Queen's University, Belfast, pointed out in 1976 that Roman Catholics were disadvantaged "not so much as the result of discrimination but because of their larger family size."

Size of family also affects the readiness either to pursue higher education or to take up "dead-end" jobs when young. These and other traceable social habits of Northern Ireland Roman Catholics are sufficient to account for Roman Catholic disadvantage in employment without recourse to selective instances to support a theory of significant discrimination of the sort advanced by David R. Lowry (*Commonweal*, July 16, 1982) on the basis of an *Irish Times* article of last March 29 which was headed "Overhaul of Northern Ireland Job Agency Urged."

Indeed Mr. Lowry should have focused his attention on the Republic of Ireland itself where Roman Catholics must be discriminated against, according to 1971 census figures. There, only 6.99 percent of male Roman Catholics were in the professional and managerial class as against 15.08 percent of male Protestants! Yet lower Roman Catholic representation in this class in the North of Ireland is cited as evidence of blatant discrimination on the part of Protestants.

Roman Catholics are members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Ulster Defence Regiment although they are under 3 percent, mainly due to intimidation.

In education, Roman Catholics have always been given particularly favorable treatment in Northern Ireland. At their own wish, they have had a separate education system of their own, parallel to the non-sectarian state system, with over 95 percent of its cost met out of public funds. There is probably no other country in the world with a population of mixed religious affiliation where a minority religious group has been treated so generously in education. Certainly nothing comparable is done at public expense for separate Roman Catholic education in Britain or in the U.S.

ALL THIS suggests that Roman Catholic grievances, at least those specific ones having to do with discrimination, were exaggerated, and that nationalist feeling was a much stronger force in the Roman Catholic community and in the civil rights movement than is generally acknowledged. Other evidence supports this view. Violence on the part of Northern Ireland Roman Catholics, for instance, did not take the form it typically does with materially deprived minorities, namely the looting that one saw in the black ghettos of America in the 1960s. Instead,it was directed toward the symbols of the state. Catholics participating in violence revealed themselves as

A CATHOLIC VIEW

VIOLENCE, SLOGANS, & DEMOCRACY

CAHAL B. DALY

Bishop Cahal B. Daly is the bishop of Down and Connor, a diocese that extends across the border and includes areas of both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. The following are extracts from an address that Bishop Daly gave to mark the World Day of Peace last January 1. The address was delivered at St. Paul's Church, Fall's Road, in Belfast.

WE ARE NOW ending our thirteenth year of political violence; and no end to our turmoil can as yet be discerned. The direct cost of violence has been appalling, in terms of death, bereavement, mutilation, damage to persons and breaking up of families, imprisonment or degrading treatment or degrading conditions of prisoners; and above all through a prolonged violation of the most sacred of all moral precepts — respect for the sacredness of human life.

The indirect cost of the violence has been incalculable, in terms of general decline in moral standards due to the breakdown of law enforcement, the increase of vandalism, the proliferation of illegal drinking houses and the spread of alcoholism, the plague of armed robberies and of extortion and protection rackets for the financing of paramilitary operations. . . . Some of our teenage youth, especially in urban areas, have never known any other environment but that of guns and bombs, confrontation and conflict; to the point where all this has come to seem to them almost normal.

Indeed, all of us become gradually inured to the recital of acts of murder and destruction. . . . Someone has spoken of the "numbness factor" in Northern Ireland: consciences become benumbed by familiarity with evil. . . . Meanwhile, as year follows year of misery, violence is conspicuously not advancing in the slightest degree the political causes which it advocates. . . . Violence is not the means to justice. . . . Violence postpones the day of justice. Violence becomes itself the cause of new injustices. . . .

It is claimed that the "new Ireland" to follow the violence will be one of peace and prosperity, justice, equality, and brotherhood; but a new Ireland is being shaped here and now by the violence itself. . . . It is an Ireland of suspicion, resentment, retaliation, and revenge which could take generations to heal. It is an Ireland of depression and a sense of hopelessness . . . . It is a great hoax to pretend that brotherhood between Irishmen can be promoted by fratricide, that justice can be built on intimidation, extortion, and protection rackets; or that economic

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essentially political and concerned with overthrowing the Unionist government.

Moreover, reforms did come. Nonetheless, "one man, one vote" did not reduce the violence. The redrawing of local council boundaries, a massive house-building program, and an allocation system for housing that favored Roman Catholics did not reduce the violence. Why? Was it that the old system was not, after all, so inequitable or, more importantly, were the nationalist leaders not really interested in reforms but rather revolution?

The call for civil rights put "the Irish Question" back into the center of British politics by presenting the Northern Irish situation in terms of discrimination by bigoted Protestants and enabling the Roman Catholic leaders to recruit support from most English left-wing and liberal opinion. They were aided by the lack of knowledge of most journalists and politicians concerning Northern Ireland. Probably the British patriotism of the loyal Northern Irish was rather too old-fashioned and embarrassing to the British. In any case, the British government's lack of understanding, combined with what many feel is a bias against the loyalist majority and in favor of the Roman Catholic minority, has resulted in its failure so far to find a policy to deal with the Northern Ireland problem.

One final sad fact is that the Northern Ireland government showed a singular incapacity to gather and present facts which might have amply vindicated its performance in many fields. For example, in spite of the grave doubts which Richard Rose of Queen's University, Belfast, in 1971 threw on the Cameron Commission's sweeping allegations about religious discrimination in public authority housing, Lord O'Neill in 1972 was still commending the Cameron report as a "textbook" for reform. Had his government been effectively monitoring the results of its own social policies and legislation, he would have had an inkling of what the 1971 census showed and could have forestalled those unjust charges which, in the end, the Northern Ireland Government dumbly accepted and needlessly suffered for.

NORTHERN IRELAND is torn by two different sets of nationalist aspirations, each rooted in history, each with its own measure of validity. But if the struggle is seen as one of simple discrimination, then naturally all sympathy goes to the underdog. The IRA guerrillas have banked on this fact to persuade many Irish-American Catholics to back their ostensible cause of "Brits out for a reunited Ireland." The terrorist activities in Ireland will fade in direct proportion to the willingness of Irish-Americans to question and challenge the IRA's propaganda. Our hope is that Americans show themselves open to both sides of the situation here, that they hear the Northern Ireland majority's voice and ponder that side of the question.

recovery can be assured when the very bases of the economy are being blown up. . . .

The Westminster government under Conservative administrations has itself recognized that the Northern Ireland problem is basically that of a peaceful coexistence of distinct Irish and British dimensions, different national identities, different historical and cultural self-definitions. . . . For there are two ways of being an Ulsterman. There is an Irish conception of Ulster and there is a British conception of Ulster, and the two have equal historical and political legitimacy. The slogan "No sharing with Nationalists" is unacceptable, for it puts more than half a million citizens of Northern Ireland outside the pale of legitimacy and loyalty. The simplistic slogan "End British rule" is unacceptable — for it flouts the right of a million citizens of Northern Ireland to see themselves as British-Irish or British-Ulster. The political rights of each community carry an obligation to respect the political rights of the other. Brave voices on both sides have been raised calling for this reciprocal recognition of rights and respect for differences . . but more such voices must be raised and be raised more loudly and clearly. . . .

THE CHURCHES must give the lead in showing how communities can not only coexist, but can grow together in love, in acceptance of their differences, in respect for different but sincerely held beliefs. There is still, in Catholic and Protestant communities, too much ignorance of what Christians of other denominations really believe and how they live their Christian lives. . . .

THE Provisional IRA has made some moves towards political involvement. If these moves represented a genuine will to enter into the democratic process they could only be welcomed. But a choice must be made. They must choose either physical force or democratic persuasion. They cannot have both. The armalite and the ballot box cannot both be carried together. The democratic process and, indeed, civilization itself consist, as the philosopher A.N. Whitehead declared, in the victory of persuasion over force. We all know regimes where the voting booths are ringed with screens of armalites and tanks. These regimes can command up to ninety-nine percent majorities, but which of us will call them democratic? Which of us would wish to live under them?

Why do paramilitary groups decline to set out fully and honestly before the people their political, economic, social and ideological policies, with credible indications as to how these policies are to be realized, so that people are made fully aware of what kind of Ireland, shaped by what kind of ideology, they are offering? Any movement which, for reasons of political expedience, conceals its ideology and camouflages its ultimate objectives is abusing the democratic process. It is practicing the pseudo-politics of Utopia and false promises rather than the politics of honesty and justice.

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A SET OF DEEPLY FELT IMPERATIVES

On humanness & honoring the dead

JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN

I ASK THE READER to picture in his or her mind's eye, at a time long ago and far away, the scene described by Richard E. Leakey and Roger Lewin in *Origins. What New Discoveries Reveal about the Emergence of our Species and its Possible Future* (E.P. Dutton, 1977). Perhaps this passage may serve as a guide through the theme of whether, and how, the living must respect the dead. Leakey and Lewis write:

> . . . from the Shanidar Cove in the Sagros Mountain highlands of Iraq, . . . on a June day some sixty thousand years ago a man was buried in unusual circumstances.
>
> The humidity of the cave was far from favorable for preserving the bones of a dead man; but pollen grains survive very well under these circumstances, and researchers at the *Museé de l'Homme* in Paris who examined the soil around the Shanidar Man discovered that buried along with him were several different species of flowers. From the orderly distribution of the grains around the fossil remains, there is no question that the flowers were arranged deliberately and did not simply topple into the grave as the body was being covered. It would appear that the man's family, friends, and perhaps members of his tribe had gone into the fields and brought back bunches of yarrow, cornflowers, St. Barnaby's thistle, groundsel, grape hyacinths, woods horsetail, and a kind of mallow.

This deliberate burial, with its non-utilitarian sensibility and delicate specificity, is described by Leakey and Lewin as an act by human survivors that "betrays a keen self-awareness and concern for the human spirit." Later, the authors remark that the *sociality* of human beings runs like a vital thread through our most distant origins. The human being, they declare, is "an animal with its own unique reasons for living in communities." What all this means is not simply that we are social beings but that we are, profoundly, beings with certain needs or yearnings of spirit as well as body. We possess an inborn imperative, a power as *potentia*, to find and to create meaning.

JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN *is associate professor of political science at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she teaches courses on feminist theory and psychological and political theory. She is the author of* Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought *(Princeton University Press).*

Honoring the dead as did those ancestors of ours, with their offerings of thistle and hyacinth, horsetail and groundsel, forms one dimension or side to a set of deeply felt imperatives which includes, as a prohibitive injunction, not harming the dead. How can one explain the fact that the actions of beings we would scarcely recognize as human (though they were hominids proper), are immediately recognized actions whose inner rationale we ourselves deeply feel? In scattering the flowers and grains as remembrances in an orderly fashion over the grave of a loved one — a family member, a tribesman, one of their own — these "primitive" forebears of ours were acting within and acting upon presumptions which help to form the bedrock, then and now, of any recognizably *human* existence.

I am running a modest transcendental argument here, not in the sense of an argument that makes reference to a world that rises above the natural and social world, but refers instead to a set of necessary presuppositions — axioms we, and others, basically agree on or would if we brought our presuppositions to the surface. Put as a question, my argument seeks to answer the following: what *must* human beings be like in order to have experiences in the way in which they have them? Such an argument, to have any force, must be, in some way, universal and strong enough to ground a sense of morality. My argument does not turn on a series of formal deductions; rather, it flows, first, from historical and anthropological evidence and second, from an interpretive approach to human subjects as meaning-bearing moral agents.

Here are two presumptions that may be taken as "bedrock" principles. First, human beings have a *need*, not merely or simply an *interest* or a *desire*, to live with and among others in relations of concrete particularity, in space, extending over and through time. If we are deprived of such relations, we are damaged and distorted in body and spirit. Second, that human beings — and here, too, the evidence stretches from prehistory through the present — experience an imperative to discover, to understand, and to create meaning. That drive can be damaged and deflected, and to the extent that it is we become less fully human. The action of our forebears honoring their dead tribesman can only be explained with reference to such presumptions or others like them that might coherently and plausibly form the basis for human morality within a shared social life. One must take up evidence from the past, like the burial at the Shanidar Cave, as a clue to a vast and awesome mystery

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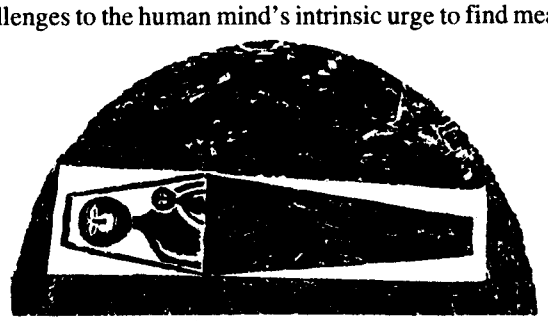
that embodies, at one end of a range of possibilities, authentic human imperatives and sets of *basic notions*.

STUART HAMPSHIRE has sketched a non-utilitarian starting point for reflections on human beings and their social universe (I have already given one clue, 60,000 years old) by demonstrating, powerfully, that human motivations cannot be narrowly subsumed within utilitarian and self-interested categories or calculations. For, as he argues, *every way of life* is built up on notions of morality and contains "prohibitions, barriers to action, in certain quite distinct and clearly marked areas of action; these are the taking of human life, sexual functions, family duties and obligations, and the administration of justice according to the laws and customs of a given society . . . A morality is, at the very least, the regulation of the taking of life and the regulation of sexual relations."

Each way of life will embody within its social forms a cluster of basic notions as the moral grounding required, in the first instance, for the creation and sustenance of *any way of life*. Without such a set of moral rules and prohibitions, basic notions and symbolic forms, no *human* society could exist.

We know of no continuing way of life, past or present, in which the dead were casually tossed out, were defiled, degraded, and left unburied to rot, in which the dead were bartered, bargained-after, or turned into dog food. (There are hideous counter-examples from extraordinary situations — Nazi horrors perpetrated on the dead and the living come to mind — but these do not qualify as a self-sustaining and continuing way of life.) This being the case, what does the universal "not-harming" or respecting of the dead say about the human species? What does it tell us about ourselves? If we keep in mind my previous presuppositions — that we are intrinsically and exquisitely social beings and that we are beings driven to create and sustain meaning — we can sketch the outlines of a series of unfolding intimations.

I shall begin with the question of meaning and its relation to non-honoring the dead. As human beings slowly differentiated themselves from other natural objects, as the distinction between *physis* and *nomos* got firmly lodged, humans became more self-consciously aware of their drive to create and sustain meaning. I assume that even our more primitive forebears, if they were capable of honoring the dead through the aesthetic creation of a burial place involving the self-conscious arrangement of remembrances and symbols, possessed a need to "make sense" of things and a desire for things to "make sense." Surely death has always posed one of the greatest challenges to the human mind's intrinsic urge to find meaning.



A being not unlike oneself, perhaps a loved one, a family member or friend, chews meat or grains around the campfire one night and the next day, without warning, is felled by an unexpected blow, falls over a precipice, takes ill and collapses, gets ripped apart by wild animals, or simply, inexplicably, fades away. Attempts to answer the "why" of death go back as far as human history, myth, and symbol-creation take us. To ask "why" is to seek meaning.

One way in which human beings structure the meaning after which they thirst is through the creation of rituals and symbols, deeds and actions that can be repeated, that have a temporal continuity that challenges life's capriciousness and its ephemerality. One cannot, perhaps, plumb the depths of "why" death as some generic question, or even why "this" death or that, but one can surround the event, when it occurs, with actions which have *meaning* for the surviving human subjects who engage in them and, in so doing, both honor the dead, or keep the dead from harm, and simultaneously reaffirm one's own meaningfulness by giving expression to the depths of one's sociality.

RESPECTING THE DEAD becomes one's honor; projecting meaning into, upon, and within death enlarges life as a meaningful activity. Life acquires a rhyme and a reason. The gods may be fickle but humans can be constant; therein lies one's meaning and one's honor. The living, knowing that at their deaths they will be honored by a ritual they have undertaken in order to honor others, achieve an enhanced sense of life as embracing past and future. Death remains mysterious, foreboding, fearful, but the rituals surrounding death, giving it structure and a certain predictability, enlarge life and round out and off its beginning and its projected end-point.

According to Hannah Arendt, the Greeks constructed an entire theory of human life on the basis of human mortality, on the recognition and acceptance that human life from birth to death "is distinguished from all other things by the rectilinear course of its movement, which, so to speak, cuts through the circular movement of biological life . . . The task and potential greatness of mortals lie in their ability to produce things — works and deeds and words — which would deserve to be and, at least to a degree, are at home in everlastingness, so that through them mortals could find their place in a cosmos where everything is immortal except themselves." The human being's life took on meaning, death was meaningful, if one left behind a story to be remembered and honored and to live after one. By suffusing death with ritual and symbol, life to the living was enhanced.

Second, our intrinsic sociality goes beyond some simple "need" for others in functional or utilitarian senses. It is a recognition that a *human* subject can only emerge through social relations of particular kinds. This sociality goes so deep and is so fundamental that it is constitutive of the self; that is, one's own self-identity is necessarily and intrinsically tied to and bound up with the identities of others. Within a framework that stresses our sociality, and that couches, at least implicitly, an account of the human subject as a being who exists in a body

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and in and through definite, specific relations which are themselves imbedded in a social context, human beings will be seen not so much, certainly not exclusively, as self-interested or even as bearers of rights (at least not along the touchstones of our most basic human ties to loved ones and kin) but as beings whose sufferings and joys, pains and pleasures, triumphs and tragedies, make them members of a human community, participants in a sacred compact, not a corrigible contract.

That is, I am not related to other human beings as one preexistent social atom is to another; nor can I treat my ties and relations, obligations and duties to others (particularly the dead or the missing or the absent) by some argument from analogy. The ties go deeper; the imagery surrounding them is more fundamental and it is captured, or at least a glimmer of it is tapped, in and through the notion of innate human dignity, of the intrinsic *dignitas* of the human subject. This means that an injury to the dignity of an other (especially a special other) is experienced, not as an external event or abstract affront, but as an assault upon myself. The special dignity of the human subject does not disappear with death. Bodily identity is one essential dimension of the dignity of the human person, a constituent feature of the intrinsic value of personhood. To harm *such* a dead person is not to damage his interests but to assault the very foundation of the human community; it is to rend the social fabric, to wreak havoc with the bases of ordinary human moral sensibility, to threaten to plunge the social world into a nightmare of nihilism.

ONE SLOGAN which has emerged from the contemporary women's movement is "my body, myself." But "my body"is not the only embodied feature of "my self." For I, profoundly, find the groundwork of my own identity, "my self," in and through the bodies of those nearest and dearest to me. One treats the body, the self, of a dead member of the human community as an end-in-itself, not as the rationalist outgrowth of an abstract debate but because our deepest wellsprings of human moral reason and sensibility lead us to repudiate utilitarian or callous alternatives. A relationship to a dead loved one does not cease with his or her death, for so long as one lives on, the life of the dead that helped to constitute one's own identity (and I mean much more here than simply "living on" in memory or legend or song or family history) remains, in some powerful if elusive sense, alive.

And so we find our fellow human beings honoring the dead or not harming the dead, actively carrying out obligations to the dead. Freud once said, "The dead are mighty rulers," by which he meant that our introjections of the voices of the powerful dead live on to govern us, sometimes unaware. But there is also a way in which one's ties to the dead are special relationships that can nourish and sustain and give courage. These dimensions are not covered, cannot be captured adequately within, the ambience of arguments from analogy, or within the frame of formal logic. In not harming the dead, in respecting the dead, we do more, much more, than enact, unthinkingly, tribal custom, or carry out, unfeelingly, abstract obligation. We link ourselves up with a web of human meanings and social imperatives that go back as far as recognizably human creatures go and will continue so long as recognizably human creatures continue to walk the face of the earth, to be born, to live, and to die. We must hold onto the strength, the profundity, the irreducibility of these imperatives against the crasser, individualistic demands of our age.

Dance

DANCE & POLITICS

THREE CONTRASTING COMPANIES

DURING THE THIRTIES, when politics influenced the work of writers, dramatists, painters, and musicians, it also found its way into the output of various modern dance choreographers. Protests over injustice and affirmations of solidarity with the oppressed appeared on a fairly regular basis, reflecting the economic suffering of the Depression, fascist outrages, and the profound crisis of conscience caused by the Spanish Civil War. During the forties, anxiety about the nuclear age was expressed and black choreographers excoriated racist attitudes. Charles Weidman's "Lynchtown" was one of the few pieces on the subject tried by a white choreographer.

Aside from black choreographers though, political protest faded from the foreground of white choreographers' attention until the Vietnam war re-ignited some of the fire of previous stressful times. With that war's conclusion politics was once again largely relegated to the columns of newspapers and magazines, leaving only black choreographers who continued to draw attention to racial injustices.

Well, not quite. For a few other choreographers as well, politics continued to command their creative energies; and this autumn David White of the enterprising Dance Theater Workshop produced a series of three groups and one solo artist who associate artistic expression with political attitudes in a variety of meaningful ways. Martha Rosler uses video, slides of newspaper headlines, stories and images from popular culture as the basis for her observations. The visual show is accompanied by verbal commentary or drawn images or designs over the projections.

The New York Street Theater Caravan relies on the music, song, and dance ambience of regular cabaret to deliver its message. The eight members of the group all play one or another instrument, are racially integrated, and write their own material. The targets are sexual stereotypes—woman as passive recipient of male aggression, the machismo associated with the late John Wayne—business indifference to workers' rights, and an aggressive United States presence in those indistinguishable Latin American countries.

The United Mime Workers' concerns are with the place of

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the individual in an increasingly trivialized society. Words find their way into three of the four pieces on their program but do so tangentially — people do not really speak to one another but instead launch thoughts past one another, using disconnected and irrelevant phrases like illogical javelins. Music is accepted as it issues from a popular radio or television station; physical movement is precisely controlled.

The final group, Wallflower Order, is not a conventional dance company either but shares the belief that movement is essential to frame the message. Like the others, the company produces its own material but consists of female performer-choreographers only. The group was founded as a "woman's dance collective" and views the world through the eyes of the feminist movement. The group uses music, words, elements of ballet and modern dance, comedy, and "signing." The appropriation of the visual language of the deaf is not unique to this group, but their imaginative use of it is.

One of the immediately striking aspects about all of the groups is the unselfconscious use of black comedy and the acceptance of mixed-media theatrical techniques to convey the message. The use of video, slides, innovative lighting designs, along with the mixing of various styles of dance and gesture, were all pioneered in the sixties but here have been appropriated for political ends. The media are *not* the message but are the means by which the message is transmitted. By their use of such expanded theatrical techniques the politically committed have an affinity with the overtly non-political choreographers of the sixties but share little if anything of their formal concerns.

The quality of the work is about as varied as one might experience in a random selection of any four off-Broadway groups ranging from tolerable to imaginatively innovative. The presentations of the United Mime Workers barely rose above the level that one might encounter in a dance composition class. They were earnest, dutiful, sincere, and lacking in any creative bite. Ms. Rosler's hour-long presentation is more in the nature of a personal crusade by a visual artist who has drifted over into the performance art area. The New York Street Theater Caravan uses the skit, song, and musical format that is easily connected with traditional cabaret. To a great extent their routines do not break any new ground, but some involving "bag ladies" and hard-hats are witty. The numbers that deal with revolutionary activity in Latin America are so blatantly black-and-white in their characterizations that they become reduced to an almost cartoon level. The feelings of anger and sympathy are real enough, but the recounting adds little to the stark facts.

Wallflower Order, by contrast, is fresh, innovative, and at times profoundly moving. Perhaps the impact owes something to the special view of the world as seen through women's eyes but the imaginative blending of theatrical elements is effective in its own right. The most powerfully realized pieces were "Mothers" and "Tower" and the least effective were "Hay Canto" and "Maripose." The difference in impact derived from the immediacy of the former as subjects close to home, full of precisely observed detail contrasted with the relative remoteness of the pieces based on revolutionary activity in Latin America. The five "mothers" were believably human, muttering through clenched teeth like a drill instructor, "Tonight we are going to have a *nice* dinner!" or an exasperated "What did I do to deserve kids like you?" The "kids" of course grow up; have teen fantasies (Jimmy Dean: "I see a frightened little boy"; or Marlon Brando: "He stands up for his principles") and in turn try careers and motherhood. They all stumble over the difference between the American dream and the American actuality. In "Tower," which almost seems like the finale of "Mothers" since it is presented right after it, they chant and sign a poem about self-possession and acting in self-interest. The signing is very beautifully handled as a round in which all join for the unison conclusion.

"Trail of Tears" joined narration and signing again to recount the expectations and experiences of Native Americans being driven from traditional lands as the country expanded westward. "Immigration" was a moving delineation of the experiences of workers from Eastern Europe making their way in turn-of-the-century America. The five women of the group—Suchi Branfman, Nina Fichter, Pamela Gray, Krissy Keefer, and Lyn Neeley—work collectively on their pieces and mix various styles of gesture and dance confidently and skillfully. Their performing brio is winning; and as long as they explore themes that lie within their immediate experience, they are strongly convincing. DON McDONAGH

Screen

PRESENT LAUGHTER

ECCENTRIC BUT SMART

COMEDY IS JUST looking at the world in an eccentric way, taking a peculiar point of view toward events that, seen from another angle, might be tragic or revolting or merely ordinary. A classic example is Preston Sturges's 1944 film *Hail the Conquering Hero*, which was recently revived in New York as part of a Sturges retrospective featuring beautiful, new 35 mm. prints. In this movie the war heroes are a bunch of mugs, and a helpless young man named Woodrow Lafayette Pershing Truesmith (Eddie Bracken), who's been given a medical discharge for hay fever, is the hero. In 1944 in America, this was a *very* peculiar way to look at the world.

You might guess from Woodrow's middle names that the military is something of a tradition in his family. His father died in World War I; and Woodrow is so chagrined at not getting a chance to do likewise in the Second World War, he has been duping his dear old mom and the other folks back home into thinking he is overseas. As the movie opens, he is in a bar drowning his sorrows when in comes a platoon of

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Marines home on leave, bristling with decorations, and broke. Woodrow buys them a beer, so they adopt him. They are a very odd lot, the oddest being a grim-faced, shell-shocked youngster who was obviously screwy in the first place and who, being an orphan, is craziest of all about other people's mothers. He decides that Woodrow mustn't disappoint his. To be sure Woodrow doesn't, in fact, he calls her up to say her son has been mustered out after a tough tour of duty in the Pacific, and he'll be home on the next train.

When the other guys in the platoon find out what their buddy has done, they commiserate with Woodrow. But they figure — what the heck — they've still got a weekend left on their passes. They might as well escort the reluctant hero home. The Sarge (William Demarest), who is only slightly less wacky and tight-lipped than Woodrow's sponsor in this fiasco, even stuffs Woodrow into a spare uniform for the occasion. Up until now, the movie has only been fast-paced, lunatic, and hilarious. But when Woodrow and his pals arrive home to find that the whole town has turned out to give him a hero's welcome, the fun begins in earnest. It is the presence of the platoon of nut cases, and especially of Demarest as the Sarge, that really keeps things rolling. Between them and an equally daffy group of men on the civvy side — a gang of corrupt politicians against whose mayor (Franklin Pangborn) the reformers draft Woodrow to run — this movie turns out to be one of the brightest American comedies ever made.

Sturges was a master of character roles, and what makes them funny is that they're not just stereotypes. They're stereotypes seen in some peculiar new way, given odd twists of character that make them unique. His talent for this sort of thing is already apparent in the first film he both wrote and directed, *The Great McGinty* (1940), where there is a thug in whom the icy calm and impassivity of the hired killer is so extreme that it becomes more like the pasty-faced blandness of a clerk or a tailor. This character's most expressive gesture is to chew a toothpick. He's the perfect parody of the tough guy in a '30s movie. All the great comedies that Sturges made during the '40s, from *McGinty* through *Unfaithfully Yours*, are sustained by character roles and bit parts like this. In *Unfaithfully Yours*, the high note is a private detective whom the central character, a renowned conductor (Rex Harrison), expects to be the usual shifty, low-life type. Instead, he turns out to be a music-lover. "I adore the way you handle Handel!" he tells the conductor.

Sturges recognized the importance of such roles so clearly that he maintained his own stock company (Demarest, Pangborn, Porter Hall, Almira Sessions, Raymond Walburn, et al.) to play them. He wanted to populate his movies with talented comics, performers he could trust to get a laugh no matter how small the scene or part. As I've pointed out before in this column, the secret to making comedies is to keep the pace lively. To do that, a writer-director like Sturges has to generate a lot of material. He has to make even marginal characters and throw-away lines count. This comes naturally to somebody who looks at the world in a rather skewed way anyhow, as Sturges did. What makes the stock characters in his films unusually funny is that they are figures seen out of the corner of the mind's eye, with the distortion that peripheral vision always gives to things.

Having an eccentric view of the world made Sturges, along with other great comedians like Socrates, a bit of a gadfly. All the nonsense out on the edges of Sturges's films originated in some central part of him that was highly moral. Perhaps the fairest way to describe his point of view would be not as peculiar, but as independent, free from many of the prejudices, predispositions, and assumptions of his time. The independence of his way of looking at things becomes apparent at the end of *Hail the Conquering Hero*, when Woodrow is elected mayor on the reform ticket because everyone in town thinks he's a war hero. He hasn't wanted any of the adulation his imposture has brought, and now, as he stands before the crowd at town hall to make his acceptance speech, he can't do it. Instead, he tells the truth, except that he takes all the blame on himself and lionizes his friends in the Marines.

This of course makes Woodrow, in our eyes, a far greater hero than he could have become on any battlefield. The point Sturges is making is not one that has ever been popular with Americans, and never less so than as they emerged victorious from World War II. It is that moral courage is far harder to come by than mere physical courage. This isn't a terribly profound point for a movie to make, and Sturges doesn't belabor it. Still, it is the point that the entire movie has been leading up to. For once, a comedy doesn't need to escape the dilemma it has created. It doesn't have to end with an evasion or a gimmick. I always feel cheated out of my laughter when that happens. Because it doesn't do this, *Hail the Conquering Hero* has a certain wholeness that's very satisfying.

In his own day, Sturges was thought of as a cynic. (Even James Agee, who should have known better, accused him of this in a review.) Sturges wasn't cynical, though. He only seemed to be because he had too sharp an insight into his own times. His powers of perception, and the course of his career, were rather like Robert Altman's. Both directors had in them one decade of great filmmaking, after which their work declined.

While Sturges was not really cynical, he was perhaps a bit jaundiced about life. He was corrupted to a certain extent by his own perceptiveness about how the system works in this country. Eddie Bracken, who came to see himself in *Hail the Conquering Hero* at the retrospective, told the audience there a wonderful story about the making of the film. The opening scene has a very complicated shot where the camera has to travel from the Marines at their table down the bar to Woodrow drinking his beer. Sturges got this shot on his first attempt, Bracken said, but then spent an entire day doing retakes of it. Finally Bracken, exasperated, asked Sturges why he kept repeating the shot when he already had it in the can. "This is supposed to be a 'B' picture," Sturges confided. "But if I can run it over budget just enough, it'll become an 'A' picture. Then they'll have to give it 'A' advertising, and it'll have a much better chance of being a hit." You see. Sturges wasn't cynical, just smart. COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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A different-looking Orwell

KATHARINE BYRNE

THE FAMILIAR press card snapshot of George Orwell suggests a man haunted by the "Orwellian" future he has projected: the death of freedom, even that "final freedom within the few centimeters of a man's brain." But the Orwell Archive contains other pictures. In one he is feeding his goat, Muriel; in another he is pushing his adopted baby in a pram. This other Orwell looked not forward to horrors of life under The Party, but backward to mythic values of earlier times, to virtues and pleasures of ordinary people, and to the earth itself as a source of regeneration. "Orwell-like" is the term his meticulous and sympathetic biographer, Bernard Crick, uses to encompass those elements of life the writer sought for and cherished.

This may be the right moment, before the prospect of the year 1984 encourages a new rash of Orwell interpretations, to consider this "minor" Orwell, a man worth seeking and not hard to find, in his essays, novels, letters, diaries, and interviews with old parties still living, who knew-him-when.

Who was Eric Blair, the child who grew up to sign himself "George Orwell"? (George: a common English name; Orwell, the name of a river he knew as a boy.) Although he was born in Burma, the middle-child and only son of Anglo-Indian civil servants, Orwell's early memories are of Henley-on-Thames, a small town in the south of England where he played with the plumber's children who lived down the lane, rode in the farmer's wagon, watched men plant turnips and shoe horses. But his mother dismissed the local children as "common," their accents as "vulgar." His precarious social position — he pinpointed it precisely as "lower upper-middle class: that means upper-middle without money" — required that he take the only path open to the son of genteel and landless parents. He must go to a boarding school that would help him win a scholarship to a good public school.

Thus it was that at the age of eight he was torn from a natural world he was never to forget. As he says in his boarding school memoir, "Such, Such Were the Joys," he was "flung into a world of force and fraud and secrecy, like a goldfish into a tank full of pike." This was the world of Crossgares, a school run by money-grubbing proprietors bent on getting a good return on their investment, the reduced rates at which he was enrolled. Beaten and prodded, "stuffed like a Christmas goose" with the answers to old examination questions, he lived for six years in this loveless place of cold baths, slimy food, and frozen playing fields dominated by "the gouging knees and trampling boots of older boys." He was often ill with a bronchial disorder. His cough, the headmaster assured him, was caused by overeating.

Only "very occasionally," he writes, "it was possible to escape from the barracks-like atmosphere of the school." One of the masters would take a couple of boys out into the country where they "would charge back and forth in the sunshine after butterflies." Long afterward he recalls "the beauty of enormous dragon flies hovering over the tops of the grasses" and the joy of "tea in the parlor of a pub, with large slices of pale cake." The headmaster's wife regarded with suspicion these excursions into the real world, and natural history itself she dismissed as "a babyish pursuit . . . faintly plebeian; and it didn't help you pass exams."

THE BOY did win the scholarship — two of them — and went on to Eton, where, once the pressures were off, he coasted, reading widely what interested him and sloughing off the rest. Upon graduation, instead of following most of his classmates to one of the great universities, he went off to Burma as a member of the Imperial Indian Police, later described by him as "five years in an unsuitable career." While he was engaged in "the dirty work of Empire," his old Eton classmates were building helpful networks and connections. When he returned to England he carried with him not only a sense of guilt toward all oppressed people, but a mistrust for university-trained intellectuals. Largely self-taught himself, he was impatient with organized, systematic, or doctrinaire groups. On the other hand, he was anxious to know and understand those close to nature, or at least not deprived of their "natural" good sense and decency.

In an effort to learn more about the oppressed of his own country, he used to go into the East End of London or out into the country roads beyond, dressed as a tramp. Sometimes he failed to fool those he wished to encounter; he was pleased when a man he helped to pick up a barrow he had upset said, "Thanks, mate." Once, when he tried to get himself arrested for drunkenness, a police sergeant offered him a cup of tea and told him to go home. His first book, *Down and Out in London and Paris* (1933) grew out of his tramping days, hop-picking experiences, and life as a *plongeur* in hotels and restaurants. All of these episodes were efforts to live "if not of, at least with and among the oppressed."

One of Orwell's early protagonists is Flory, the British planter in *Burmese Days* (1934). Lonely for England, disgusted with the arrogance and racism of the empire-caretakers at the officers' club, Flory seeks solace in walks through the jungle, a natural world, away from his ugly compatriots. Although the scene is Burma, Flory sees plants that remind him of home: aspidistra-like things and bergamot, the mint-flower of a Kentish countryside. Whenever he reaches the

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ford of a shallow stream "the sight heartened him; its water clear, rarest of sights in this miry country." After a swim in clean, greenish water, he "feels happy and at peace." Only in the natural world can Flory, who clearly speaks — often in little anti-imperialism essays — for his author, find relief from the intrigues of upper-class British colonials.

In his next book, *The Clergyman's Daughter* (1935), the story of a patient drudge, Orwell comes closer to home. Dorothy is the child of a vicar, a man of vast pretensions and no money. It is not until she becomes a victim of amnesia and finds herself in the hopfields of Kent at harvest time, among migrant workers (Orwell's first proles, someone has called them), that she meets decent and generous people.

In the following year, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* appeared, featuring the seedy scion of a middle-class family who determines to reject the "money god" and live outside, below The System. Although he is pulled back into it — all of Orwell's people follow circular paths — he determines to reenter on better terms. He will not follow the genteel snobbery of the university crowd. He will try to share the values of the aspidistra-cultivators:

> . . . behind their lace curtains, with their children and their scraps of furniture . . . they continued to keep their decency . . . their standards, their inviolable points of honor . . . they kept the aspidistra flying. Our civilization is founded on greed and fear, but in the lives of common men these are mysteriously transmuted into something nobler.

Although he later disclaimed these last two books as unworthy things he wrote to keep alive, they show his thinking about the class ladder and his affection for those on the lower rungs of it.

Orwell's documentary exploration of the lives of poverty-stricken miners and industrial workers, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, is an admiring defense of their strength and decency. He could understand those who married and had children "on the dole." He defended the miners who turned down respectable council housing with its promise of indoor plumbing, if it meant giving up the right to keep and race pigeons.

THE YEAR 1938 was a hard one for Orwell. He had entered the Spanish War on the side of the Republicans, joining a revolutionary militia soon discredited, disavowed, even hunted-down and destroyed as "fascist" by those Spanish Communists supported by Russia. He came out of that war with two wounds, one from a sniper's bullet that went through his neck, the other inflicted by English socialists who refused to believe his truth about the war. The failure of his *Homage to Catalonia* left Orwell more than ever convinced of the duplicity, the power-worship, the elitist rejection of truth by British intellectuals. Sick in mind and body, he turned to the past of his own childhood for the scene of his next book.

Coming Up for Air, in spite of the exuberance of its fat, middle-aged salesman, George Bowling, is a sadly nostalgic book. Having won a little money his shrewish wife doesn't know about, Bowling sets off to rediscover the village he lived in around 1910, a place much like the one young Eric Blair loved when he was a little boy not yet packed off to boarding school: Bowling remembers that then,

> People had a sense of continuity and didn't feel the ground they stood on shifting under their feet . . . It was a place where it always seemed to be summer when I look back. I can feel the grass round me as tall as myself, and the heat coming out of the earth — Streams weren't poisoned with chemicals or full of rusty tins and motorbike tires.

One of Bowling's fond memories is of warm, lazy days on the bank of a river, with a fishing rod. At the end of his failed effort to find a world long gone, he realizes, "You can't go back. There'll be no fishing this side of the grave." Bowling returns to his life in a dismal suburban rowhouse, in a development called Bellevue, where "there is no view and the bell doesn't ring."

Nineteen Eighty-Four's Winston Smith, like George Bowling, has his brief, hopeless journey into his own past, a golden country of vague memory, back in his earliest childhood, before the Party's takeover of mind and body. He and his Julia dare to go out into the countryside together, in reckless defiance of Party rules.

> Winston looked out into the field beyond, and underwent a curious slow shock of recognition. He knew it by sight. An old, close-bitten pasture, with a footpath wandering across it and a molehill here and there . . . the boughs of elm trees swayed just perceptibly in the breeze, and their leaves stirred faintly in dense masses like women's hair. Surely somewhere near by, but out of sight, there must be a stream with green pools where dace were swimming.

Again, in the passage above, the familiar elements of Orwell's backward look to a natural world. But the awful present intrudes, catches up with the hapless resisters as Winston wonders if there is, "after all, a microphone hidden somewhere near."

Later, as the Thought Police are about to close in on him, Winston stands at a window watching a prole woman hanging out a line of laundry.

> Tirelessly the woman marched to and fro, singing and falling silent, pegging out more diapers . . . It had never before occurred to him that the body of a woman of fifty, blown up to monstrous dimensions by childbearing, then hardened, roughened by work till it was coarse in the grain like an overripe turnip, could be beautiful . . . It was curious to think that the sky was the same for everybody, in Eurasia or Eastasia as well as here. And the people under the sky were also very much the same . . . people who had never learned to think but who were storing up in their hearts and bellies

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KATHARINE BYRNE is on the faculty of Mundelein College in Chicago. Her essay "George Orwell and the American Character" appeared in *Commonweal,* Apr. 12, 1974.

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and muscles the power that would one day overturn the world. If there was hope, it lay in the proles . . . passing on from body to body the vitality which the Party did not share and could not kill.

TWICE, in his own adult years, Orwell had the opportunity he longed for, ho renew his lost connection with the earth and the people who live close to it. In 1936, after his marriage to the ideal writing man's wife, Eileen O'Shaughnessey, the couple rented an old cottage that had once housed a failed general store near the village of Wallington, in Hertsfordshire. There were birds nesting in the rafters, mice rattling the dishes, and no running water. But there was room for a garden and a few farm animals; it was a happy time and place for Orwell. His diary notes that his wilted seedlings are in need of rain, that the first columbines and Sweet Williams are in bloom, and that the health and productivity of their goat has improved. "Born, alas, in an evil time," as he says of himself, Orwell was soon impelled by events to go off to Spain, leaving Eileen to tend the garden and sell the penny-candy. Often he was torn in this way between nature and necessity.

Years later, the Spanish War and the one that followed it over at last, his wife dead, his own health failing, he went back to Wallington and found that the Woolworth roses he had planted a decade earlier were alive and blooming still. In a late essay, "A Good Word for the Bishop of Bray," he speaks of planting a walnut tree as an act of contrition, expiation; a rendering of good to those who will look upon it with pleasure long after the gardener is gone.

To one of his readers, a doctrinaire socialist who complained that his paean to Spring, "Some Thoughts on the Common Toad," had no class-angle, he replied,

> I think that by retaining one's childhood love of such things as trees, fishes, butterflies, and . . . toads, one makes a peaceful and decent future a little more probable . . . by preaching the doctrine that nothing is to be admired except steel and concrete, one makes it a little surer that human beings will have no outlet for their surplus energy except in hatred and leader-worship.

In the last years of his life, Orwell looked to the Hebrides island of Jura for the regeneration he longed for. His friend George Woodcock said of him, "He was like the mythic giant Antaeus, unbeatable as long as he could touch ground and regain strength from his mother, the earth." (He was, in fact, 6'3", wearing size 12 shoes, and looked more like Don Quixote than a Greek wrestler.) Jura, a wild place of natural beauty and few amenities, was the realization of an old dream. Orwell admired its crofters, wanted to help with the haying and liked to cut peat; the local farmers, survivors of times before advanced mechanization, may have reminded him of those turnip planters he had followed as a child. He hoped that his own little boy, Richard, adopted shortly before the death of his wife, would grow and prosper on Jura — and become a farmer.

But Jura was cold in winter. Years of self-neglect were catching up with Orwell; although he was very sick he would not leave the island until he had typed the entire manuscript of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* twice, without help. From mainland hospitals he wrote letters describing Jura's white beaches, its lochs full of trout, his concern that Richard have milk from tuberculin-tested cows. Finally, his doctors hoped that the altitude of some magic mountain would relieve the pressure on his lungs. On January 21, 1950, shortly before his chartered plane was to take off for Switzerland, he died of a hemorrhage. His old friend Malcolm Muggeridge says there was a fishing rod at the foot of his bed.

Books: PULLING THE PLUG ON INDUSTRY

A GREAT DEBATE is now occurring about the shape of America's future. In one corner, garbed in elegant economic theory, is a mixed assortment of conservatives, liberals, and radicals convinced that our nation must take the "fast track" of "high technology," if it is to resume the rapid economic growth of the Golden Age, 1948-68. Most of big business is in this corner, as are its Republican spokesmen. But there's no shortage of Democrats here, including presidential hopeful Sen. Gary Hart and neoliberal Sen. Paul Tsongas. Maverick socialist Lester Thurow adds left-wing luster to the arguments for free markets.

THE DEINDUSTRIALIZATION OF AMERICA

Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison
Basic Books, $19.95, 323 pp.

MINDING AMERICA'S BUSINESS

Ira C. Magaziner and Robert B. Reich
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $25, 390 pp.

David Bensman

Advocates of the "high tech" road regard the demise of "sunset industries" as necessary and inevitable. "Creative destruction," they argue, echoing Joseph Schumpeter, is capitalism's way; if old trees don't die, there won't be sunlight enough for new ones. Steel and autos, textiles and electrical appliances — these are labor-intensive industries, best-suited for developing economies with poor and unskilled labor forces. America must move on.

But there is hope for industrial workers, and for the communities built around the smokestacks. Neither Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, nor Robert Reich and Ira Magaziner agree that America should pull the plug on its industrial base. Indeed, *The Deindustrialization of America* argues that the costs of industrial decline, measured in lost jobs,

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dislocated communities, distressed people, and disrupted local institutions, are far higher than the free marketeers acknowledge; the cost is intolerable. Both books argue that a strong government role is needed to preserve and create jobs, healthy neighborhoods, and national wealth.

To begin with, neither set of authors agrees that the decline of American industry is the fruit of inevitable growth processes. Bluestone and Harrison argue persuasively that U.S. manufacturing is in trouble because corporate behavior has changed in the postwar era. Conglomerates have taken over industrial corporations, and treated them as absentee landlords treat tenants. Through a careful study of plant closings in New England, Bluestone and Harrison demonstrate that American-based multinationals drain profits from their Snowbelt facilities to finance expansion in the South and overseas where there are no bothersome unions to contend with, and where taxes are low. The reason is not profitability, they argue — the New England plants are profitable — it was a matter of profit maximization: the conglomerates maintain only those subsidiaries racking up rates of return exceeding 20 percent or 25 percent.

Magaziner and Reich emphasize a different cause of the decline of industries where America once stood tall. They charge U.S. businessmen with a short-term profit orientation that blinded them to the strategic problems they faced.

Take the steel industry for example. When Japanese manufacturers began exporting cheap steel to the U.S. market in the early 1960s, American corporations shrugged. They didn't make much money on low-grade steel anyway, and it seemed inconceivable that the Japanese could compete in the lucrative specialty-steel and alloy markets. Eventually American producers recognized the need to introduce the advanced manufacturing processes Japanese steelmakers favored, but when they did so, their shortsightedness undermined their competitive efforts. Magaziner and Reich document how steelmakers introduced new facilities piece by piece, constructing a continuous caster here or a basic oxygen furnace there whenever corporate accountants certified that the projected rate of return on that particular investment was satisfactory. As a result, steel manufacturers ignored the fact of their declining competitiveness until the trickle of imports had reached their knees; ever since, they've blamed foreign "dumping" and U.S. regulations for their problems.

Bluestone and Harrison's analysis of deindustrialization's causes differs from Magaziner and Reich's, and their solution differs as well. Because they believe that if U.S. corporations pursue their profits, mass unemployment will persist and social inequalities will widen, Bluestone and Harrison believe that union, church, and community activists must press for government intervention to stop corporate disinvestment, protect basic industries, and stabilize American communities. Their vision is democratic and profoundly radical.

Magaziner and Reich come down between the free marketeers and the protectionists. They see the problem as more technical than ideological: businessmen must develop effective strategies for international competition, and government must learn how to support and encourage business efforts. Their survey of the industrial policies of America's competitors suggests that our federal government must abandon its piecemeal non-policy — a subsidy here, a tariff there, with tax cuts thrown in in accordance with the lobbyists' power — in favor of a comprehensive plan. It may strike some readers as dangerous to create a planning technocracy with the power to target some industries for subsidy and others for extinction, but let's not forget that today, faceless conglomerates make these decisions.

Magaziner and Reich advocate some protection of American industries, but emphasize that it can only be temporary. "Infant industries" should be sheltered until they're able to stand on their own; the auto industry may deserve support until it develops new technologies; but in the long run, all will have to compete in global markets.

And what if the market decrees death to the steel industry, to Youngstown, Gary, and South Chicago? Unlike the cruel apostles of the free market, Magaziner and Reich propose detailed and humane aid for the victims of capitalism's creative destruction. Their survey of social democratic programs in Western Europe prompts them to advocate job retraining, regional development programs, and wage subsidies for workers displaced from their jobs in declining industries. When a government helps workers adjust to rapid economic change, pressures to preserve outmoded factories are less; that makes it easier to pursue industrial growth.

As the depression deepens, Americans are going to have to debate and choose — "free trade" or "fair trade"; labor-intensive industries or high technology; free market forces or government planning; investment tax credits or planned social investment? These are new debates for Americans used to operating within the framework of free enterprise assumptions. Vigorous debate and careful thought are needed before we can usefully embark in new directions. *Minding America's Business* and *The Deindustrialization of America* will help get us started.

'The astonishing creature was myself'

THE TORCH IN MY EAR

Elias Canetti

Farrar Straus & Giroux, $16.50, 372 pp.

Alberto Manguel

BY 1931, at the age of twenty-six, Elias Canetti had completed what Iris Murdoch called "one of the few great novels of the century," *Die Blendung* (translated into English as *Auto da fé*). Half a century later Canetti has decided to find the young man he had been and to conjure up his remembrance of things past. The result, *The Torch in My Ear* (together with the first volume of these hopefully unending memoirs, *The Tongue Set Free*) is a gift of friendship,

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as if one of the most delightful, intelligent, generous men of this century had pulled up a chair, patted us on the arm and begun to tell us stories about his love for life.

The Torch in My Ear begins when Canetti, his widowed mother, and his younger brothers arrive in Frankfurt, having left his beloved Zurich behind because, he later discovers, of the advice of a friend of his mother's, supposedly in the interests of the children's education. From the age of 14 up to the time of the writing of *Die Blendung* in Vienna, Canetti carefully chronicles the adventures of his "tongue set free" ("rescued" is perhaps a better word for "*gerettete*," rescued from silence), describing the world as perceived by his enlightened ear (*The Torch* of the title is a reference to Karl Kraus's journal, *Die Fackel*, which exercised so strong an influence on Canetti in Vienna).

The chronicle is passionate and the passion twofold: books and people. (In *Die Blendung* Kien, the hero who, like Emmanuel Kant, sets fire to his books and is burnt to death among them, declares his profession to be "owner of a library.")

Books: Canetti learns about love in Kleist's *Penthesilea* and Strindberg's *A Fool's Confession* ("Don't read that!", his mother tells him. "You'll destroy something for yourself that you'll never be able to restore. Wait until you've had your own experiences. Then it can't harm you."). He learns about caring for every human being ("not just my neighbor") and to stand up against the inevitability of death in the Epic of Gilgamesh; about friendship in (or through) Dostoevsky ("Can you imagine a better way of getting to know a person than discussing *everything* that happens in Dostoevsky?").

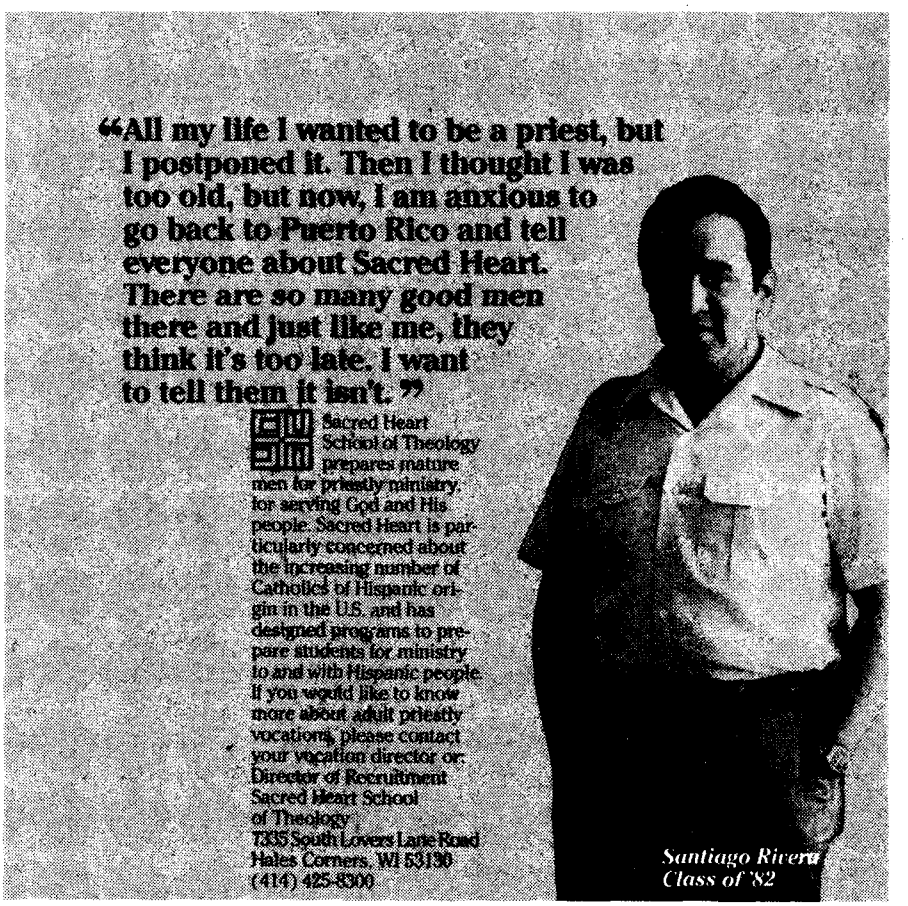
People: We are introduced to a pageant of characters—casual acquaintances, friends, relatives, nameless passersby, and famous figures like Kraus and Brecht and Isaac Babel and Grosz. And here the magic begins: it is not the names we know that we feel most concerned about—it is the others, the faces of forgotten dreams recalled by Canetti's peculiar urge for truth. Here they are, each a "true book: each individual human being, bound in himself." Here is Fräulein Bunzel with "a somewhat whining voice, as though lamenting her ugliness with every sentence"; here is Hans Asriel who "was a distance builder; this was his hidden talent, and he built distances so well it was impossible for others and for him to leap across them"; here is Ibby Gordon, "a Malliol figure" who "never spoke fast" but "since she *thought* quickly, many things in her waited for their turn to come and were mirrored in their own joy before becoming visible."

Names are important: magically they reflect a person's secret qualities. The young Canetti doubts Kraus's power before meeting him because of his "highly ordinary name"; he is attracted to Veza—his future wife—because her name reminds him of one of his favorite stars, Vega, in the constellation of Lyra; he finds Freud's name more alluring than Kraus's "because of its dark diphthong and the *d* at the end, as well as its literal meaning, "joy." Finally he tires of

> *Nothing is more irresistible than the temptation to enter another person's inner space. If he is someone who knows how to place his words, his silence intensifies the temptation to the utmost. You set out to obtain his words and you hope you will find them in back of his smile, where they await the visitor.*
>
> —Elias Canetti
> *The Torch In My Ear*

names. He feels "like a feeder goose, incarcerated and force-fed with names." His escape, as is to be expected, comes through literature. Trying to resist this avalanche of names, Canetti finds strength in the others, in every person who has no name, in everyone who is "poor in name," and these become the characters who people his work. That is how *Die Blendung* was written.

Throughout his memoirs Canetti is nearly always generous. Only one name, that of Brecht, is spoken of unkindly. "He did not look as if he had aged prema-


"All my life I wanted to be a priest, but I postponed it. Then I thought I was too old, but now, I am anxious to go back to Puerto Rico and tell everyone about Sacred Heart. There are so many good men there and just like me, they think it's too late. I want to tell them it isn't."
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turely, but as if he had always been old." "He did not care much for people, but he put up with them." And "He had a great respect for money; the only important thing was *who* received it and not where it came from." Though Canetti confesses he admired, even loved Brecht's poems, Brecht the man repelled him, and the final outrage was to learn that Brecht had written a poem about Steyr Automobiles and had received a car in exchange.

Few writers—Stevenson, Walt Whitman, maybe Chesterton—offer us, together with their work, their person. They want us to know them, their "essential core" and, what is stranger, they seem to want to know us. It is not only the spectacle of the world they see that they put in front of the reader; it is they themselves as observers who do not shy from being observed; they are the true first person singular which so easily becomes first person plural. In another, earlier book of memoirs (brilliantly translated by J. A. Underwood) *The Voices of Marrakesh*, Canetti describes himself looking at a curious beggar and being in turn stared at by the people on the street. "The astonishing creature was myself," he discovers with amazement "who stood so long uncomprehending." In *The Torch in My Ear* we, the readers, have at last become the observers; as a token of faith we have been given another man's life to hold in our hands—and if that is not friendship, I do not know what is.

Encountering Marxisms

A MATTER OF HOPE
A THEOLOGIAN'S REFLECTIONS ON THE THOUGHT OF KARL MARX
Nicholas Lash
Univ. of Notre Dame, $19.95, 312 pp.

CHRISTIAN-MARXIST DIALOGUE IN EASTERN EUROPE
Paul Mojzes
Augsburg, $14.50, 336 pp.

Arthur F. McGovern

NICHOLAS LASH wants theologians to "take Marx seriously," to engage in a serious study of Marx's own writings. He feels that even those theologians who appeal to Marxism have rarely studied Marx in any detail. So Lash, a Cambridge University theologian, undertook an in-depth study of Marx's thought in order to explore its implications for theology. His study includes extensive use of Marxist scholars (E. P. Thompson, Kolakowsky, Althusser and others).

The major and almost exclusive focus of Lash's inquiry is into the metaphysical and epistemological foundations of Marx's view of history. Marx's economic theories and analyses of class struggle receive little attention. Lash also concentrates most on the early writings of Marx. Some critics will judge this narrow focus as a shortcoming, but it permits a depth of reflection which might have been lost in a book of wider scope.

For the patient reader Lash's study will provide quite rewarding. It generates significant insights, insights into the strengths and weaknesses of Marx's thought and insights into the implicaions of Marx's thought for Christian theology. But the book assumes familiarity with Marxism or the intelligence to plunge into complex issues without such background. Reading Lash's book is much like mining for valuable ore: a not-too-rewarding labor at first, then the discovery of a nugget or two, and finally reaching a rich vein which made continuing on worthwhile.

The first several chapters of the book proved unrewarding, for me at least. Readers familiar with Marxism may find few new discoveries; other readers would be better served by a simpler introduction to Marxism. These first chapters deal with the issues of "continuity" between the young and the mature Marx, different meanings of Marxism, Marx's *The German Ideology*, his use of the dialectic, the meaning of history, and the meaning of truth.

Once Lash moves into the question of Marx's "materialism" the book becomes much more enriching, and his chapter on "Christian Materialism" is especially valuable. "Materialism" has many meanings: cultural materialism (the pursuit of money and material possessions), epistemological materialism (which includes different types of realism); historical materialism (which stresses the influence of economic structures in history), and metaphysical or philosophical materialism (which rules out all but matter as the basic "stuff" of the universe). Lash contends, correctly in my opinion, that Marx was arguing primarily for historical materialism, which does not presuppose or entail a monistic, metaphysical materialism.

But if Marx was not a metaphysician, atheism and by implication philosophical materialism do seem central to Marx's historical materialism. Lash's response to this question is insightful. Marx's atheism was rooted in a conviction that humans, not God, should control their own actions and destiny. If God causes and controls history, humans do not. This "God-or-man" dichotomy Marx based on his reading of Hegel, whom he took to be representative of Christianity. For Hegel spoke of history as if it were the product of "Mind" or God, with human initiatives only used by this Mind or God to fulfill its own purposes. So, from Marx's perspective, one must do away with God, if humans are to be the true subjects of their own history. (I would argue that Lash gives only one interpretation of Hegel, but he is right to the extent that it was Marx's reading of Hegel.) And while I would agree that Marx's historical materialism does not entail metaphysical materialism, I think Lash overstates his case in saying that Marx himself "was not a materialist."

Lash carries this insight about "God versus humans" into his important chapter on Christian materialism. Some Christians have viewed God as acting separately from human actions. But one can also be a Christian and believe that God acts only in and through nature and human history, hence that God is not an alternate cause to human actions. Moreover, if the central idea of historical materialism is the recognition of the in-

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fluence of economic conditions on history and on our thinking, then a Christian "materialism" is indeed feasible. It is also quite consistent with Christianity to consider the transformation of conditions which impede human growth as essential to the process of redemption, which too often has been viewed as affecting only the consciousness of individuals.

But Lash's endorsement of Christian materialism does not mean an acceptance of Marxist analysis. Lash finds Marx's model of a superstructure in society built upon an economic base to be a "singularly inapt metaphor" for explaining historical reality. For while given conditions do set limits on what can be changed, efforts to prove economic factors even "ultimately determinative" cannot succeed. The metaphor "reflection," to describe the relation of superstructure to base, likewise underestimates the relative automony of art, literature, and religion. At issue, says Lash, is what constitutes "real"knowledge as opposed to "appearances." By reducing real knowledge to scientific knowledge, Marxists fail to recognize a whole range of knowledge expressed in symbols as well as through ordinary experience, which is a prerequisite for scientific knowledge. In particular, Marx and Marxists have failed to investigate the true nature of religion which, while it may "project" human needs and aspirations as Marxists claim, also attempts to express an experience of mystery *discovered* in reality.

Finally, in the last chapters of the book, Lash takes up the question of the future. Once conditions are present which allow social change to occur, Christians should be involved. Redemption touches the whole of human life. Marx was right in challenging a utopianism which merely holds out an ideal. But Marx's own vision of the future was flawed, not so much by failures in his predictions about the triumph of socialism as by his over-optimism regarding human nature. He failed to recognize limits, most especially in respect to moral transformations that do not automatically follow upon economic changes. Christians can fail also by subscribing to an optimistic myth of human progress, or by rationalizing sufferings of the past and present in terms of God's providence. But the true Christian vision, Lash concludes, is "a matter of hope" for humanity, built upon a recognition of limits but built also upon the unity of human ideals with reality which Jesus embodied.

If Lash's study called for probing in depth, Paul Mojzes's book on Marxist-Christian dialogue in Eastern Europe involved a great breadth of research, the gathering together of a vast number of sources (one chapter alone has 405 end notes). The result is a very clearly written survey of dialogues in several countries over the past twenty or thirty years. Mojzes divides his history according to six different types of encounter, ranging from total absence of dialogue in Albania to a level of involvement in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia which caused leading Marxist intellectuals to be ostracized. Mojzes prefaces this history with chapters which include a statement of his own worldview, conditions for dialogue, motives for dialogue, etc. Later chapters include studies of novel Marxist views on religion and changing Christian perceptions of socialism. The final chapter explores a dozen major issues most often discussed in these dialogues (e.g. alienation and sin, the future, Jesus and Marx, the meaning of work). For the scholar interested in these dialogues in Eastern Europe, Mojzes's book will be indispensable; for those interested in the general topic of Christian-Marxist dialogue, the book will also prove quite useful.

Potent only as allegory

A MIDNIGHT CLEAR

William Wharton
Knopf, $12.95, 242 pp.

Tom O'Brien

WILLIAM WHARTON — a pseudonym for an American living in a houseboat on the Seine — is one of the finest writers in English today. His previous works, *Birdy* and *Dad*, drew on experiences of family life and war to create rich, powerful, and vivid treatments of a prevalent modern theme, the close proximity of certain types of madness and imaginative moral vision. *A Midnight Clear*, however, is somber, almost monotonous. It relates the story of a squad of young soldiers in an intelligence and reconnaissance unit during the Ardennes Offensive (or the Battle of the Bulge) around Christmas 1944, when their unscrupulous superiors first posi-

History demands not merely to be interpreted but to be changed. And it is not only our consciousness that needs to be changed, but the circumstances in which that consciousness finds expression. Christianity is not redemptive if it merely interprets.
—Nicholas Lash
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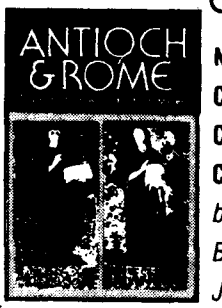

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tion and then nearly abandon them in a deserted chateau near the German lines. At its best, *A Midnight Clear* is a moving allegory about the difficulties of making peace, not war.

Unfortunately, it takes some time to get *A Midnight Clear* moving, and it remains potent only as an allegory because Wharton leaves his most effective weapon behind, his gift for describing inspired insanity in his two previous novels. *Birdy* concerns a youth who raises parakeets so well, and observes them so faithfully, that he eventually hallucinates entry into their world; *Dad* concerns the terminal sickness of the narrator's father — sickness relieved by flights of inspired fantasies of a better life. "Listening to him," the narrator comments, "is like Laura Ingalls Wilder as told to Lewis Carroll and produced by Walt Disney."

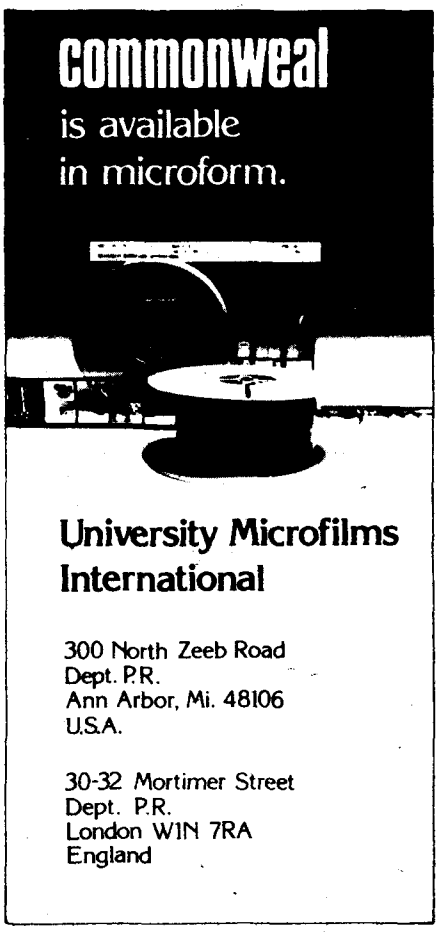
The narrative voices in both books, moreover, are dominated by an urgent, pained need to communicate. Reading Wharton is like being buttonholed by a modern version of the Ancient Mariner reciting a story of Dostoevsky translated into English by Lenny Bruce. There are times when one has to put down his books not because they are boring, or, on the other hand, too thrilling, but simply because of the need to break from a draining but powerful conversation with a friend in an emotional crisis. *Dad* and *Birdy* are grueling both in what they give and what they take, full of frank talk and genuinely tough confrontations; their tone is vulgar, earthy, earnest, immediate. The language is quick, notational, dominated by the present tense even when recollecting, and peppered by sharp wit and home truths. In *Dad*, the narrator, enduring a meal between a sick father and an emotionally intolerant mother, comments, "We get through the meal fine, but I develop indigestion waiting for something to happen." With such small brushstrokes and the accumulative Niagara-like force of his prose, Wharton domesticates madness and insinuates how all strong feeling — in all of us — borders an abyss.

This is no more true than in the last one hundred pages of *Birdy*, when the hero's friend tries to help him recover in a mental hospital after World War II. Here "Birdy" has entered his ultimate fantasy, crouching about and jumping like a bird, refusing to eat or act like a human — after being wounded in a terrifying attack by Japanese in the South Pacific. The conclusion is magnificent; his friend's description of how *he* nearly went mad in combat worthy of *All Quiet on the Western Front* has a powerful climactic effect on Birdy's "illness." It is a loony, magnificent novel, not only in its treatment of a brotherly kind of friendship, but also in its contrast between Birdy's harmless pastoral among the parakeets and the larger madness of modern weapons.

A Midnight Clear brings together these concerns with war and family life, but without Wharton's usual interest in madness. The army squad is a microcosm, both of family and social types. There's a Jew who wants to be an advertising executive, a health nut who wants to be a doctor, a mechanical genius, "Mother" Wilkins (so nicknamed because he constantly worries about all of the others) and "Father" Mundy (an ex-seminarian who persuades the squad to abjure profanity to mark their dissent from the regular army). Their rejection of the war is wider: they belong to a specially selected group of draftees who were test-selected for high I.Q.'s to make up some elite battalions that have since been broken up into regular units whose commanders sneer at them as "whiz kids." (Their particular commander, Major Love, is a former undertaker, and seems to regard them as cannon fodder.) As in so many combat novels, the real enemy is thus behind the lines, not in front of them. In a sense, the nickname of Wharton's narrator sums up the squad's relation to the rest of the army: he is Sergeant Will Knott, alias "Won't."

Inexperienced but determined to stick together, the squad plays at war by the book, setting up foxholes, telephone posts, and code words for safe passage around the chateau and surrounding estate. The local Germans do not cooperate by attacking, however; instead, they tease the squad by building strange scarecrows in the woods, staging ambushes that they fail to take advantage of, throwing snowballs instead of grenades, and finally decorating a fir tree with Christmas gifts and signs. The novel is at its best as we await what will happen on the "midnight clear" of the traditional carol: will goodwill unexpectedly break out among men? the mood of these still, quiet, suspenseful sections of the book is perfectly caught in the cover illustration by the author, who actually spends most of his time on his houseboat, painting. For him, the Seine is still near the Ardennes.

But Wharton's "family" in *A Midnight Clear* is made of wit, not substance. We never get to care for the individual fates of the soldiers or feel for them as we do for the characters in *Dad* and *Birdy*. A war book, ironically, replaces bang with whimper. In part, the problem is structural: Wharton spends too much time describing the family and self-indulgently delineating its superiority to the army before the real story truly begins. The only time these opening sections come alive involves remembrances



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of training camp before the squad got to the cold plains of northern France. If Wharton wanted us to catch boredom as the essence of military life, he has succeeded, and in so doing committed the imitative fallacy. Were it not for faith engendered by *Dad* and *Birdy*, I would not have continued.

Most importantly, the narrative voice of *A Midnight Clear* is cool and detached. "Won't" recalls the events from calm retrospect, many years after the fateful Christmas. In *Birdy* and *Dad*, the narrators recollect past events too, but in the middle of a present crisis — a crisis usually generated by some form of both sublime and pitiable dementia that adds an especially poignant and simultaneously terrifying aspect to the climax. In *A Midnight Clear*, Wharton pursues his sense of extraordinary human riches destroyed by the madness of the so-called normal world, but without a crisis and a genuine Quixote at the center, he never soars. *Birdy* and *Dad* catch something essential about life: the pain we suppress for the sake of social sanity, but must acknowledge in some form lest we scream. *Birdy* and *Dad* are cathartic wrestlings with that pain, and finally function like exorcisms. *A Midnight Clear* is like taps.

My advice: buy the earlier books and read them instead.

An almost unshakable hold

NEW SELECTED POEMS

Ted Hughes
Harper & Row, $15.50, 242 pp.

WHISPER TO THE EARTH

David Ignatow
Atlantic, Little Brown, $10.95, 88 pp.

SELECTED POEMS

Galway Kinnell
Houghton Mifflin, $12.50, 148 pp.

DREAM FLIGHTS

Dave Smith
Univ. of Illinois Press, $10, 76 pp.

Charles Molesworth

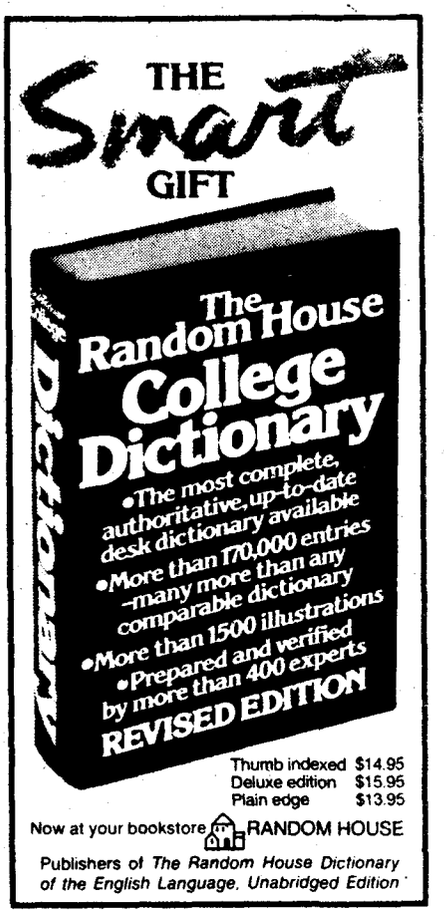
WHAT SORT of knowledge does poetry offer us? Readers insist on music and pleasure when they turn to a poem, and many contemporary poets are returning to these qualities after a long period of brittle wit and grim irony. But many poets also know there is no turning back from the pained awareness of modern reality, and if they're to sing and delight us, they must continue to tell us what they know. "After such knowledge, what forgiveness," asked Eliot, and some people have been bold enough to formulate answers. They are hardly comforting answers, and they lack the certitude of science. The heart has its reasons, however, and the dream has its question and answer dialectic. What the poem tells us usually draws on these stores of experience, and we have to listen with a following ear and quick eyes. Here are brief reports on the latest work of some studious teachers.

In Galway Kinnell's *Selected Poems* thirty-five years of poetry definitely originates in a single, identifiable sensibility. From the largely ironic and structured *First Poems*, on through the ecstatic longing for transcendence in *Body Rags* (1968) and *The Book of Nightmares* (1971), Kinnell's career develops as a paradigm of one of the major shifts in postwar poetry. This shift affected the work of many poets directly, such as Robert Bly and James Wright, but it also indirectly altered the major idiom of American poetry, moving as it did toward a language of empathy and celebration. Drawing on various sources such as Rilke, Whitman, Lawrence, and Frost, Kinnell's poetry gained prominence because of its Romantic scale and yearning. Throughout all of his volumes, this poet has known a central paradox:

> It is written in our hearts, the emptiness is all.
> This is how we have learned, the embrace is all.

Emptiness answered by embrace: these are for Kinnell an emotion and a bodily gesture, a physical condition and a spiritual response. The balance of this formulation doesn't guarantee the truth of its scope, its desire to know and say "all," but it embodies that desire. Large scope has to reside in balance, the balance of any lyrical utterance. Those poems from the middle of the journey — "The Porcupine," "The Bear," and "The Last River" — brought to perfection one strain of the American sublime, that imperious, empathetic invasion of nature with its need to infinitize the ego and yet to gather all details, all sensory awareness. Even when Kinnell's asceticism veers towards masochism, and his religious temper mingles with secular celebration, we have work that must be attended to if we are to measure our poetry at its fullest. As in Wordsworth's "Immortality Ode," we are given "fallings from us, vanishings" as the source of our knowledge. Kinnell's best poems plunge us into a darkness that is more than sufficient, and their light is made bearable only by their music.

With David Ignatow's poetry the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knowledge offered is almost exclusively that of solipsistic boredom. The speaker shows scant interest in music or images, and his world seldom unfolds as more than an occasion of sad isolation. Opening with a few poems about trees and clouds, the dominant tone turns from one of acceptance ("He is without fault, he is of the weather") to one of isolation, and finally to despair ("we are the life we live and none other"). Throughout poems written with minimum regard for the measures of verse, and in the prose pieces which make up half the book, the language runs to the flat, almost affectless plain style of American speech. Ignatow apparently knows he cannot formulate a bold or large statement about life, but his recourse to an existential acceptance of the limited self doesn't stop him from circling his own psychologized awareness. The book includes four "conversations" that prosaically rewrite Beckett, and there are touching poems about his desk chair, want ads, and fantasies about air travel, but everything illustrates the same lesson. The spirit of Eliot's Prufrock lives in Ignatow's spare dailiness, and he honestly faces and declaims his moral enervation. Deranged joy, caustic wit, the gesture toward the sublime: seldom do these post-Romantic answers appeal to Ignatow. He prefers to go it alone, and he takes limited pleasure in knowing millions of others share this common solitude.

Ted Hughes's *New Selected Poems* expands on the earlier *Selected Poems* of fifteen years ago, and so we have to confront almost three decades of this distinctly atavistic poetry. Driving right to the extreme consequences of the primitive strain in modern poetry, Hughes employed animals to focus his knowledge of human fate. Not only jaguars and eagles, but pike and thrushes and gnats are made to serve this drama of inquiry and conflict between and among the forces of nature, consciousness, and blinding emotion. For Hughes the universe may occasionally surrender its secrets but it never abates its strengths. From the first poem in the volume there is the awareness of a force beyond our usual limits:

> Something else is alive
> Besides the clock's loneliness
> And this blank page where my figures
> move.

The gloomy, almost satirical view of man's folly and benightedness turns apocalyptic with the epic ferocity of *Crow* (1971), by which time Hughes was generally regarded as the best living British poet. *Crow* remains his major statement, the repository of his darkest humors if not his brightest music, and this massive symbolic construct mixes notions of death, nihilism, and immortality. There are other poets who echo some of its dread but none outstrip its mad logic. For Hughes the questions, before and after *Crow*, are whether consciousness will survive its own cosmic anger (the answer apparently is Yes), and whether this survival promises anything beyond itself (here the answer is No). He wonders at one point about the thrushes' "bullet and automatic/Purpose," and insists that "Mozart's brain had it, and the shark's mouth." For Hughes the universe is quick with purpose, but that is no saving grace, nor is it redeeming knowledge, given the nature of that purpose. One is reminded of Keats's line, "where but to think is to be full of sorrow." But there is no soft incense or drowsy numbness in Hughes. His Yorkshire blood is clear with rage.

Dave Smith's poetry contains more of a knowledge hungered for than a wisdom obtained. He wants to arrive "at the bottom of my historical place," as the first poem says, to be "buoyed beyond the dark snags and splinters of what we once were," as the last poem promises. Often the poems are about places — Virginia, Utah, an abandoned boatyard — where the speaker remembers a childhood guilt, or speaks as a father trying to reassure his own children. We can hear some faint tones of the confessional strain that dominated our poetry two decades ago. But more often the language and settings are dreamlike, and as the book's title says, born of flight. The flights are chapters of psychological quest, fuller than Ignatow's, less sublime than Kinnell's but with a distinction of its own. Sometimes the language veers into a slightly clichéd Southern romanticism: "hard eyes glitter and pour forth in passion," or a knife "cuts quickly in like a hurried kiss." The plangency here comes from an unassimilated grand style such as Robert Penn Warren's, one of Smith's acknowledged sources. Occasionally the poems end flatly ("She's dead now, I think."), as if

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REVIEWERS

DAVID BENSMAN teaches labor studies at Rutgers University and is writing a book on labor's concession bargaining.

ALBERTO MANGUEL is co-author, with Gianni Guadalupi, of *The Dictionary of Imaginary Places*. His *Anthology of Fantastic Literature* was published last spring by Lester & Orphen Dennys.

FATHER ARTHUR F. McGOVERN, S.J., is an associate professor of philosophy at the University of Detroit and the author of *Marxism: An American Christian Perspective* (Orbis).

TOM O'BRIEN is a free-lance writer who teaches English at the Manhattan School of Music.

CHARLES MOLESWORTH is a professor of English at Queens College of the City University of New York.

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unable to master the memories or longings they have stirred up. Smith is the youngest of these four poets, and in some ways is still learning what he needs to say. But his love of a full, even lush, music marks him as a writer worth our care and concern.

Each of these books possesses a firm knowledge, an almost unshakable hold on one person's experience. All four can delight and teach, and they are all readily opened by any reader's inquiring mind.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 130)

"It is for us to find the message, interpret it, and make it living for today's youth." It is our intent to work toward these goals by developing educational programs and materials bearing upon peace and its relationship to all the other causes to which John devoted so much effort.

One incidental correction should be noted, though. The Pax Christi Center, though sponsored by and affiliated with Pax Christi USA, is an independent organization established to serve and assure the "primacy of conscience" in all matters related to war and peace.

GORDON C. ZAHN
Pax Christi USA
Center on Conscience and War

The wrong villain

Paris

To the Editors: If Howard Rosen and Alexander Kaplen, your reviewers of David Calleo's *Imperious Economy* [Jan. 14], had read the book a bit more carefully they would have discovered that Calleo blames neither the Great Society nor the Vietnam war for setting off America's inflationary spiral. Kennedy's "New Economics" is quite explicitly his villain. The review gives the impression that Calleo is a typical left-liberal who blames America's economic woes on military spending. But Calleo is a fiscal conservative; both military and domestic spending arouse his ire.

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Trinity College, Burlington, Vermont 05401. June 19-24. Luis Alonso-Schokel; Karl Donfried; William Holloday; Carolyn Osiek. Write: Sr. Miriam Ward.

Symposium

On the life and thought of Abraham Joshua Heschel. May 9-11, 1983. College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, Minnesota. Speakers will include: Bernard W. Anderson, Robert McAfee Brown, Samuel H. Dresner, Eva Fleischner, Edward K. Kaplan, Wolfe Kelman, John C. Merkle, Ursula Niebuhr, Fritz A. Rothschild. Further information write: Dr. John C. Merkle, Theology Dept., College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN 56374.

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